

Cycling

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WEEKLY

Thursday September 24, 2015

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are direct mount brakes a fad or the future?

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It's showtime

The cycling industry is now well into show mode with new bikes and equipment being unveiled at the Eurobike and Interbike shows in the last month. That's all well and good for the industry and the media, but not much good for you, dear reader, in your quest to find your next new bike.

We've brought you some of the best bits of kit through our pages, but I know it's not the same as actually seeing them in the flesh. Thankfully the Cycle Show at Birmingham's NEC this weekend levels the playing field.

If you're not planning on going, then I thoroughly recommend it. Even if your 2016 budget won't stretch to a new bike, there'll be plenty of other kit to look at and generally coo over.

If you're into bikes as much as I am, then you'll always get that little twinge of excitement when you walk into a bike shop and see something shiny and new that you haven't seen before. That's multiplied several times over at the show, with hundreds of exhibitors at the NEC.

You could even come and visit the *Cycling Weekly* stand. I plan to be there on Friday and if I'm not milling around some new bikes, I'll be on our stand happy to have a chat.

The really good news is that our readers can get a discount on their tickets by ordering online (www.cycleshow.co.uk) and using the code 'CYW'.

Simon Richardson,
Acting editor



Photos: Jesse Wild, Geoff Waugh



Michal Kwiatkowski
tells CW about his year
as world champ, p32

**Exclusive
interview**

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Brits get ready for Richmond test

Swift to head World Championships road race charge

Ben Swift will be deputising for Mark Cavendish at the World Championships road race this Sunday as injury and withdrawals have hampered Great Britain's men's team in the build-up to Richmond.

Cavendish, who previewed the course in May this year and was to be GB's leader going into the race, confirmed his withdrawal last week due to injuries sustained in a crash on stage six of the Tour of Britain.

According to his team the Manxman, 30, underwent surgery to repair partial tear of his AC ligament on his left shoulder on Monday and will not race again this season.

His withdrawal comes alongside that of Chris Froome, who fractured his foot on stage 11 of the Vuelta a

España, and Geraint Thomas. The Welshman, who rode to 69th overall in Spain, cited fatigue as he pulled out of the competition in the US.

Man down

Adam Yates was a late replacement for Thomas; however, at the time of going to press, the team of Swift, Yates, Ian Stannard, Stephen Cummings, Andy Fenn, Luke Rowe, Scott Thwaites and Alex Dowsett remained one man below its full quota of nine riders.

Swift, whose last win was a stage of Settimana Coppi e Bartali in March, and who sat out three months of the year following a crash in May at the Tour de Yorkshire, is well suited to the 261.4km course. The race comprises 16 laps of a circuit featuring two short climbs, one of which is

cobbled, and which his teammate (and room-mate in GB's central Richmond hotel) Alex Dowsett believes "lends itself towards those sprinters who can endure a bit of pain".

Great Britain's team director Rod Ellingworth admitted that the national team's shortage of WorldTour riders limited its options but that Swift, who finished 12th in the World Championships 12 months ago, could do well.

"Luckily we've got guys who can perform across a number of terrains," he told *Cycling Weekly*. "The road race uses a really good course. It's going to be a really open race. We've got some options; I think it's a race for the Classics sort of riders, people like Peter Sagan, Alexander Kristoff, Michael Matthews, and Greg Van Avermaet."

Orica-GreenEdge get to grips with the roads of downtown Richmond ahead of last Sunday's team time trial. Libby Hill Park, the 200-metre, 10 per cent cobbled climb visible in the bottom right, will be tackled eight times in Saturday's women's road race, and 16 in the men's event 24 hours later



BMC victorious in Worlds TTT

Nick Bull

BMC successfully defended their World Championships team time trial crown in Richmond on Sunday afternoon, after a dominant display across the 38.8-kilometre course.

Their six-man squad, comprising Rohan Dennis, Silvan Dillier, Daniel Oss and Manuel Quinziato from last year's title-winning team, as well as Stefan Küng and American Taylor Phinney, set the fastest splits at each of the three intermediate time checks and finished 11 seconds ahead of 2012 and 2013 champions Etixx-Quick Step. Alex Dowsett's Movistar placed third, 30 seconds behind BMC's winning time of 42:07.97. Sky, featuring Ian Stannard and Luke Rowe, were ninth while Tinkoff-Saxo finished dead last after Michael Valgren and Michael Rogers crashed.

It was BMC's third team time trial victory of 2015, after successes in the Tour de France, Vuelta and Critérium du Dauphiné.

"Last year when we won, it was a bit of a surprise to a lot of people," said Dennis. "To win again really puts our mark on the team time trial on a world level. It is pretty big for BMC."

Dowsett was pleased with his team's performance, telling *Cycling Weekly*: "A podium finish was our aim, and I think finishing on it proves we're getting better year on year."

"That course really favoured the big, strong riders, and BMC and Quick Step have a lot of them. I think with Adriano Malori, Jonathan Castroviejo, Jasha Sütterlin, who's really come on this year, and me, we're not too far away."

The 26-year-old from Essex was pleased with his post-Tour of Britain form; he was scheduled to ride yesterday's individual time trial with Steve Cummings, and is part of the nine-man British squad for Sunday's men's road race.

"I sat at 500 watts for a couple of minutes before the climb [of Governor Street, approaching the finish], and I was doing some big turns," Dowsett said. "I felt pretty good."



Armitstead on form for Worlds tilt

Brit star in excellent shape in Richmond

Lizzie Armitstead goes into the biggest and most important event of her 2015 season having taken her first Road World Championships medal in the women's team time trial last Sunday.

Armitstead, 26, and her Boels-Dolmans team narrowly missed out on victory in Richmond, losing by six seconds to Velocio-SRAM after Christine Majerus suffered a puncture early on the 38.8km course.

The American team of 2014 world time trial champion Lisa Brennauer

took their fourth consecutive win in the event; her team-mate Trixi Worrack has now won every edition of the race since it was reintroduced to the World Championships in 2012.

Meanwhile Armitstead will lead Great Britain in the women's road race this Saturday (September 26), an event she has been building up to all year.

The Yorkshirewoman was bitterly disappointed to finish seventh 12 months ago in Ponferrada, Spain, but brings excellent form into this year's event having sealed her second consecutive

win in the World Cup with victory in the GP Plouay on August 29.

The 129.8km road race course comprises eight laps of a 16.2km circuit around Richmond, USA, with each lap including a narrow, 200m cobbled climb through Libby Hill Park, an ascent similar to Michaelgate in Lincoln, which Armitstead used to launch her successful attack at the National Championships in June.

Armitstead will be supported by double junior world champion Lucy Garner along with Jessie Walker, Mollie Weaver and Alice Barnes.

Doull has 'great chance' at U23 title race

After his impressive Tour of Britain performance, GB's Olympic Academy programme coach Keith Lambert believes Owain Doull stands an excellent chance of winning the World Championships under-23 road race tomorrow (Friday).

Doull leads a strong five-man British squad, all of whom finished the recent national tour,

for the 162.2-kilometre event in Richmond, USA.

The 22-year-old placed 19th in last year's Worlds in Ponferrada, but Lambert rates the Welshman's chances this time around.

"Owain has superb form, and if he takes that from the Tour of Britain into the Worlds, he'll have a great chance," said Lambert.

"The Worlds have been a big

target for him, around everything else he's been working on, on the track ahead of the Olympics and he's keen to get on with the job."

However, a supporting cast of Gabriel Cullaigh, Scott Davies, Tao Geoghegan Hart and Alex Peters means the squad has the ability to adopt a flexible strategy.

"We don't need to ride on the front from kilometre zero to try

and control it for a bunch sprint," added Lambert. "We've got riders we can use as decoys if need be."

Rumoured Sky signing for 2016 Gianni Moscon (Italy), Tour de l'Avenir runner-up Jack Haig (Australia) and BMC's Tom Bohli are among the race favourites.

Doull placed fifth in Monday's under-23 TT, 36 seconds behind Danish winner Mads Schmitz.



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Floodlit hill-climb a brilliant success

Bolsover and District CC event draws the crowds

Chris Marshall-Bell

A Derbyshire hill-climb illuminated by a dozen LED floodlights has been hailed a resounding success, with organisers predicting even better to come in the future.

The Bolsover and District CC Hill-Climb, which used the 650-metre exit road of the Elizabethan Hardwick Hall country house in Chesterfield, attracted 76 competitors last Sunday. A 7pm start time meant all riders raced under darkened skies.

Danny Featherstone, winner of the inaugural event last year, was one of eight who bettered his course record of 1-31, but he could only finish fifth. Peter Cocker (Pedal Pushers) won with a time of 1-24.4, while Emilie Verroken (Langsett Cycles RT) was the fastest woman at 1-48.3.

The majority of competitors ride for clubs local to the climb — including Sheffrec CC's Luke Allen (pictured), who finished joint 25th — but there are aspirations to increase the event's standing by increasing the field size to 120.

"The success of the Monsal Hill-Climb is what we want to mirror," organiser Steve Crapper said.

"We attracted a higher

level of competition than we did last year, some using it as preparation for the Nationals [on October 25], but we have a long way to go to match Monsal.

"To make it a national spectacle we will be bringing in more partners, giving it a wider scope outside the area and having a better prize fund.

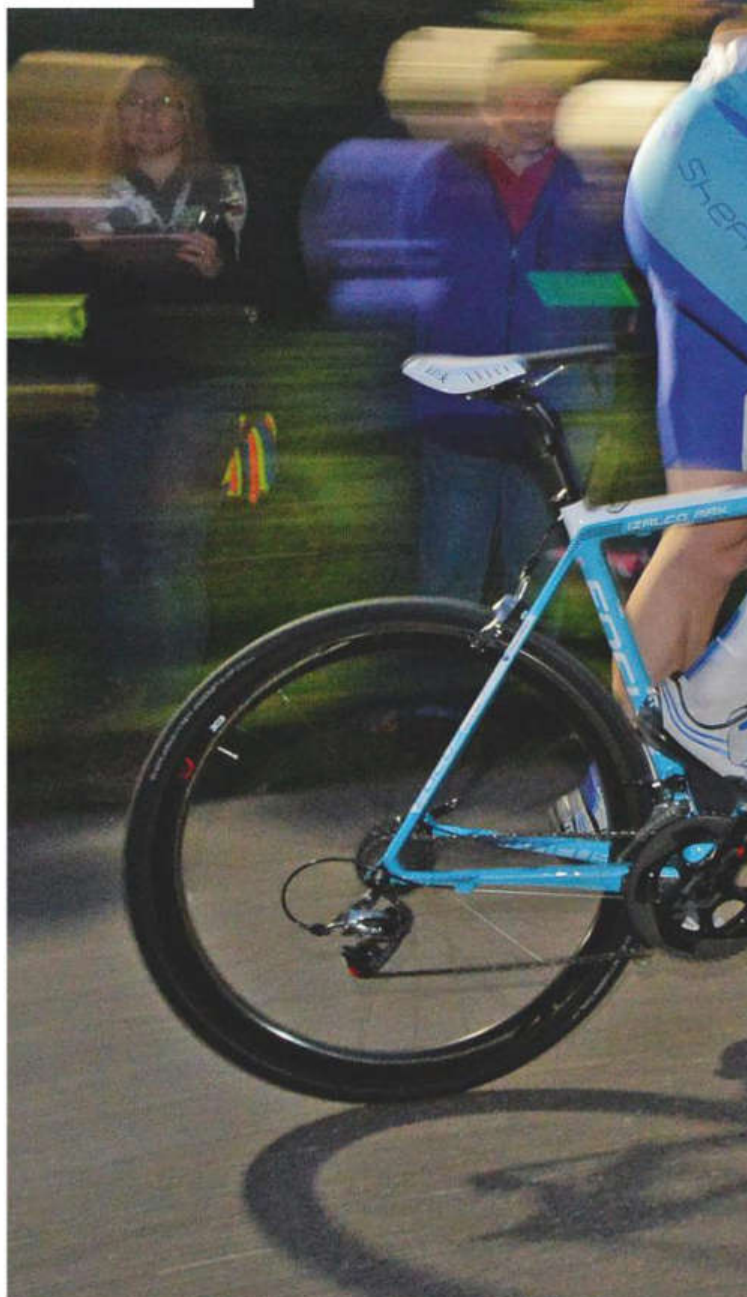
"We're considering having a mountain bike and kids' hill-climb in the afternoon next year, as a precursor to the floodlit climb."

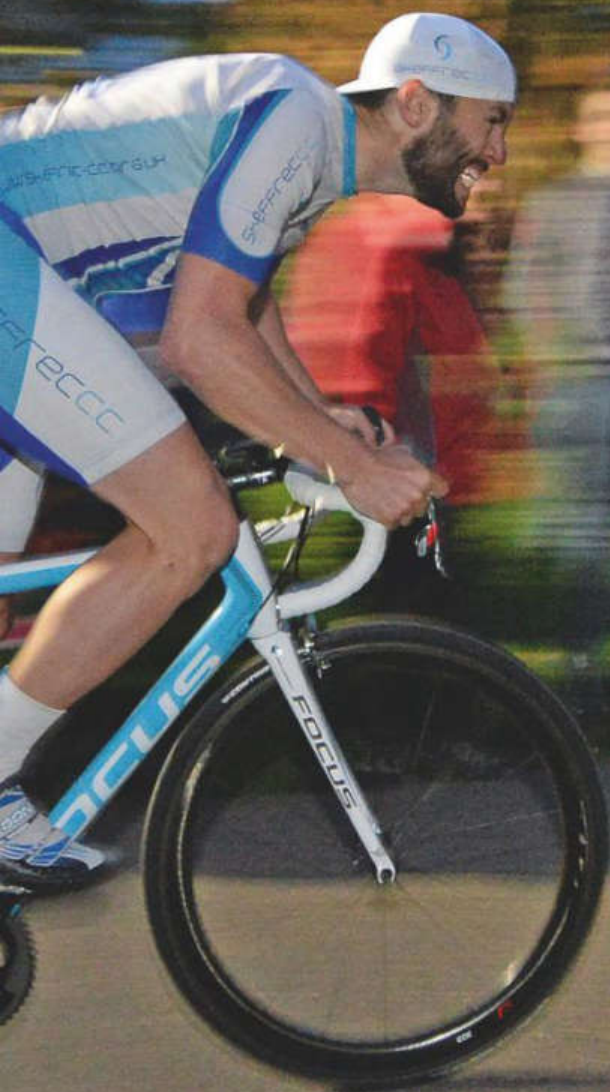
Spotlight on Derbyshire
Cycling Time Trials told CW that it believes the Derbyshire event is the only floodlit hill-climb on its calendar, and that the uniqueness of the race entranced the 400 spectators who lined the punishing climb, which averages nine per cent.

"It was fantastic. The lights were brilliant and it was so atmospheric," Crapper added.

"The top third of the climb was very busy and we had people rattling cowbells and even a person dressed up like Didi the Devil.

"The feedback has been brilliant. Everyone was so enthused and saying that they will be coming back."





MY VIEW...

Nick Bull

Cycling Weekly news writer

Surely it cannot be long before the Bolsover and District CC's hill-climb becomes regarded as one of 'the big ones' on the calendar. Combining a challenging and good-length climb, closed roads and growing roadside support, it has all the ingredients needed for a long-standing, popular event.



Reade hails GB sprinters

British women are on track for Rio, says former BMX star

Nick Bull

Ahead of her debut in this week's National Track Championships, Shanaze Reade believes Britain's female sprint squad are closing the gap on their international rivals.

Having focused on BMX in the build-up to London 2012, Reade now forms part of the British sprint team alongside Becky James, Jess Varnish, Katy Marchant and Vicky Williamson, who will all compete for the various sprint titles on offer across three days of competition in Manchester (September 25-27).

Britain hasn't won a women's team sprint world title since Reade and Victoria Pendleton triumphed in Manchester in 2008, but the former believes the signs are promising in the build-up to next year's Rio Olympics.

"It's the first time in my whole career that there are

so many competitive female athletes in the team," said the 27-year-old.

"We still need to be more competitive against the rest of the world in terms of our times, but I feel we're getting there."

Sunday's team sprint promises to be a highlight of the event: BC coaches have split the riders into teams, and the fastest woman in each position is likely to be rewarded with selection for the forthcoming European Championships in Germany and the opening Track World Cup round this winter in Colombia.

With Reade's planned teammate Dannielle Khan now ruled out, team pursuit and omnium specialist Laura Trott will deputise as her man two.

Sir Bradley Wiggins will also be in action, and is scheduled to ride Friday's individual pursuit. Tickets are available online at www.nationaltrackchamps.co.uk.



Reade's reckoning on a result in Rio

Photo: Andy Jones

Guest column

Katie Archibald



"Next up the British Track Nationals in Manchester — Nationals are a chance for people to become the 'next big thing'"

Since we crossed the marker of 12 months to go until Rio, I've found it hard to talk about anything else when it comes to cycling. Normal conversation is fine (the futility of existence always fills a bit of small talk) but if someone asks me how riding a bike is going, I tumble through three stages. The first is babbling about how fantastic our training plan is and 'trusting the long-term picture'. The second is thinking you might want to steal our fantastic training plan and publish it online for the world to steal. The third is realising that's ridiculous, but going back to discussing the futility of existence, just to be safe.

So as far as a healthy conversation is concerned, it's a good thing that I do actually have a lot else going on. Last month I won my first omnium in a UCI Class 1 [the highest category available for track events outside the Olympics, World Championships and World Cups] event over in Dudenhofen, Germany. It was a throwback to when I raced on outdoor tracks across Britain, with our scratch race called off with 20 laps to go because of a sudden downpour. The heartbreaking part is that Laura Trott and I were in the process of a bloody lap gain. The field didn't let that one go so easily when we restarted.

Next up are the British Track Nationals in Manchester — always a drama. I would say Nationals are the annual chance for people to become the 'next big thing'. In my first senior Nationals in 2013, I got a bronze in the individual pursuit, and even though next year I would win the title, that bronze felt like a bigger deal. It was my breakthrough; after that I was given a trial on the British Cycling programme and hey presto, three years down the line I've got Christ the Redeemer as my screensaver and left in a cell I'd probably scratch 'RIO' onto the walls with my finger nails. Life is so good! A similar story is Mark Stewart winning the points race last year: now he's also on the programme and is maybe just a few years away from a Tokyo obsession.

So my recommendation is to haul ass to the Manchester Velodrome and start placing bets. Racing is from September 25-27. See you there!

Former swimmer Katie Archibald made a splash in cycling when she won her first team pursuit world title after just three years in the sport

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Cross World Cup kicks off in Vegas

Helen Wyman highest placed among Brit contingent in Sin City

The riders' faces convey the concentration needed to ride through one of two sandpits on the course of last Wednesday's opening World Cup cyclo-cross round in Las Vegas.

National champion Helen Wyman was the highest-placed Briton in the challenging floodlit event, which was awarded World Cup status for the first time this year.

The 34-year-old Kona Factory rider finished 14th, 1-43 behind Czech winner Katerina Nash. Rising star Hannah Payton placed 27th, Gabby Durrin 32nd and last year's National Trophy winner Amira Mellor was 38th.

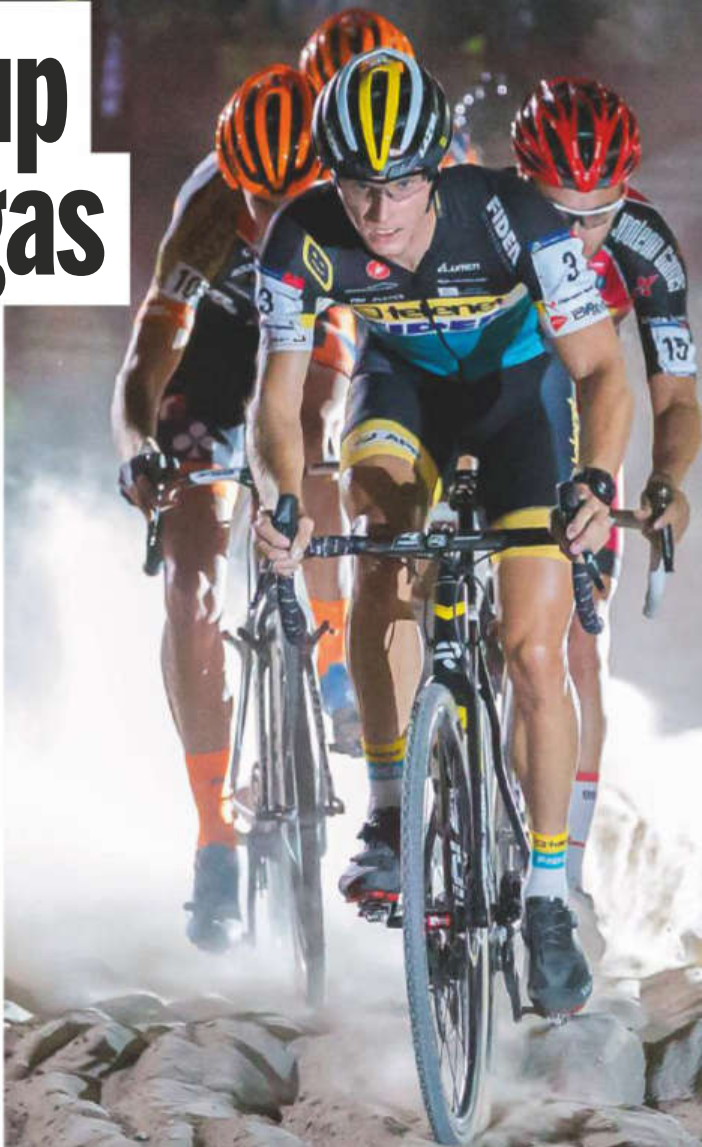
Ian Field said his 26th-place finish in the men's

event didn't "tell the whole story": the reigning British men's champion was "wiped out twice by idiots early on" in the race.

Last year's world under-23 champion, Belgian Wout Van Aert (bib number 10, far left) beat veteran Sven Nys to the victory.

The event started in 2007, and became known for its distinctly Vegas-like nature. However, a rumoured circuit-side strip club for riders, and fans handing out dollar bills to the less competitive entrants appear to have disappeared following its promotion to World Cup status.

■ Last year's World Cup round in Milton Keynes was last week voted the best of the 2014-2015 series by the UCI's Cyclo-cross Commission.



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Craddock has
been impressive
throughout 2015



Craddock signs to Cannondale-Garmin

Hot US talent Lawson Craddock announced he would be off to Cannondale-Garmin last week as the cycling transfer season continued apace. Trek confirmed the signings of Jack Bobridge and Kiel Reijnen while British team One announced they had picked up former BMC rider Sebastian Lander from Danish squad TreFor-Blue Water as they seek to go up a division to Pro Continental next year. Meanwhile Mikel Landa confirmed to Basque newspaper *Deia* that he would be going to Sky to lead the team at a Grand Tour next season, an opportunity that his current team Astana were unable to offer.

Moser the star in Essex sportive

Italian legend Francesco Moser rode and dined with British fans in Essex last weekend at the inaugural Moser Sportive. The former world champion and three-time Paris-Roubaix winner, now 64, was guest of honour at a gala dinner at the Holiday Inn, Southend-on-Sea, on Saturday night, then led a 62-mile ride from Barling Magna the next morning. "He rode on the front and he just went faster and faster," said organiser Vic Haines. Moser said he had "enjoyed himself" and hopes to return next year.

Honda joins the cycling revolution

Is the car industry waking up to the popularity of cycling? Honda unveiled the bike-friendly Civic Tourer Active Life concept car at the Frankfurt Motor Show last week, an estate car featuring retractable bike mounts, a pull-out workbench and a pump. A recent advertising campaign for the Vauxhall Mokka, with an integral bike rack as an optional extra, featured the slogan 'MAMIL ready'.

Photo: Yuzuru Sunada

Weekly column Rob Hayles



"We had an old shopping bike and a pile of carbon goodies that we would fit onto said bike in an attempt to make it faster"

Last week I did some filming for the BBC. Fellow *Cycling Weekly* columnist Michael Hutchinson was there, along with presenter OJ Borg and our producer. We had a 7.15am meeting in Salford where we would then all shoe-horn ourselves into a people carrier along with an old shopping bike from the 1980s and a pile of modern carbon goodies that we would fit onto said bike in an attempt to make it faster.

This first test required all our skill and years of loading kit into cars. People carriers are generally just that, and our hire car of choice was no exception. It had just enough room for six people — but seemingly not quite enough for the four of us and all our kit.

After 20 minutes we were close to leaving something behind; however, we just about managed to fit it all in. It was a bit different to a trip I had a few years ago for a certain magazine, where we had to take out the third row of seats to get our bikes in. With no 'left luggage' on site, we were forced to hire a second car just so we could store the removed seats for a couple of days. Who'd have thought a Smart Car could have been so useful?

Our test track was the seafront promenade at Southport, and once there, the plan was to use both mine and Michael's knowledge of aerodynamics and general bike fettling experience to find out just how much faster we could get someone to go from an ordinary sit-up-and-beg set-up, to full-on, tucked-in race position.

The first baseline run was completed and logged. We then removed the basket and got our test pilot to take off his big, flappy jacket. Just by doing this we improved the time for the 500 metres by seven seconds.

For the last test we then added the trispokes and aero bars, but by the time we'd talked our victim into a skinsuit, a huge cross-wind had blown up. The third run equalled that of the second.

With all the data logged we had come to our conclusions: if your next time trial is windy, go aero. If it's calm, just ride an old steel shopper. But whatever you do, make sure your car is big enough for you and all your kit. It could not only save you time, but maybe a few grey hairs as well.

Former double world track champion, Rob Hayles is a pundit for TV and radio. He's also a coffee connoisseur and garden shed inventor

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Photo by: George Bennett

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To do this week...

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Guardian Live: David Millar meets William Fotheringham, Wednesday, September 30, London

A year since his retirement, David Millar discusses his latest book, *The Racer*, with cycling journalist and author William Fotheringham. Providing an insight into the behind-the-scenes world of professional cycling, the discussion is followed by a Q&A. Talk starts at 7pm. £15. po.st/DavidMillar



Three Peaks: a mix of skill, stamina and sadism

Watch

Three Peaks cyclo-cross, Sunday, September 27, Helwith Bridge, Yorkshire

The UK's toughest cyclo-cross event never fails to thrill as riders tackle North Yorkshire's notorious Ingleborough, Whenside and Pen-y-Ghent climbs. The 38-mile course packs in 5,000ft of climbing and plenty of drama. Joe Moses snapped his steerer en route to third place finish last year, with Rob Jebb taking his 11th win. Racing starts at 9.30am. 3peakscyclocross.org.uk

Race

The Great Orme Road Race, Sunday, September 27, Llandudno

This fully-closed road race, consisting of seven laps of a 6.5-mile circuit, circumnavigates the coastal town of Llandudno and ascends the stunning Great Orme. With 450ft of climbing to the top of the Orme there should be a multitude of attacks and breaks. There are races for all male category riders, women and youth. On the day entry £25; £14 for youth. po.st/GreatOrmeRR

Enter

Wooler Wheel Classic, Saturday, October 3, Northumberland

There are two route distances to choose from — 56km and 103km — in this challenging sportive, which traverses sites of historical importance dating back 8,000 years. Starting in the town of Wooler, riders on the longer sportive ride will ascend in excess of 1,300m as they ride through the breathtaking rural countryside of the Cheviot Hills and the valley of Glendale. Entry costs £20 and closes on September 27. www.woolwheel.co.uk/classic-cycle-sportive

Photos: Andy Jones

BC blocks Tour de Yorkshire expansion



Race to stay as three-dayer despite runaway success

Richard Abraham

The Tour de Yorkshire will remain a three-day event in 2016 after British Cycling turned down a request to expand it to four days and elevate it to a higher status.

Welcome to Yorkshire (WTY), which runs the event with Tour de France organiser ASO, wanted to up the race to four days, improve its ranking to 2.HC and develop its women's event.

Despite support from the Prime Minister last week, WTY revealed that the board of the national federation

had declined the necessary approval to the plans, citing concerns about future changes in the cycling calendar.

Sir Gary Verity, head of WTY, said he was "disappointed by the decision."

In a statement BC said: "The board wanted to stress they were encouraged by the initial success of the Tour de Yorkshire but four months after the inaugural event is too soon for the meaningful analysis needed to reframe a four-year agreement."

Plans to expand the women's race, which this year was a non-UCI-ranked one-day event around a circuit in



Tour de Yorkshire: hugely supported by locals

York will not be affected by the decision. *Cycling Weekly* understands the exact format of the women's event in 2016 is yet to be determined.

However, the decision to turn down the expansion of the men's race could hint that funding for cycling from local authorities in Yorkshire is in serious jeopardy.

A larger, more costly Tour de Yorkshire could draw local authority funds away from other cycling projects in the county, such as facilities and other events. According to one source, a number of local authorities, some of which hosted last year's event, are considering pulling funding for cycling in 2016.

MY VIEW...

Richard Abraham

Cycling Weekly news writer

Hugely ambitious organisers and a cautious governing body: a lot of people could see this little clash coming. But the Tour de Yorkshire, riding a wave of enthusiasm, doesn't lack the potential to get bigger and better. Organisers just need the patience to make sure it doesn't happen too soon, and governing bodies can't let it happen too late.



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Brits Abroad

Tom Bracegirdle, 21

VZW Handi-ness,
Ottenburg, Belgium

Where are you? I'm currently in the greenhouse! We don't have our own bedrooms so privacy is limited. It's warm in here! Our house is in the middle of Belgium so we train in all areas but we normally head south.

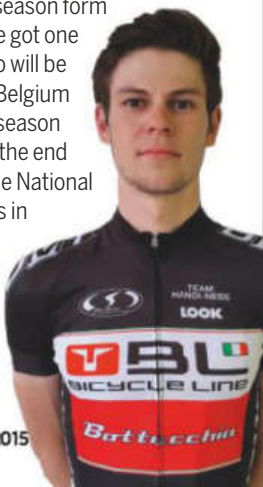
How's the racing? In the inter-club races teams race against each other but in the kermesses they work together.

How's the form? I crashed on my first race of the season and then got tendinitis in my knees in July so I was out for a month. I had a problem with my hips at the beginning of the season, which I didn't know about, and that led to the knee problem. I'm back racing now though.

What have you learnt? I have learnt so much through the sheer amount of racing, two kermesses per weekend. I'm quite old-school: I carry a little purple book that I write down all the positive and negative things that I do in races. I find it helpful to write it down to etch it into my memory so when I'm in situations I can remember what I did before.

How's life? At the beginning of the season we did some gardening for a neighbour to earn a bit extra. We go to Wavre, a nearby town, to get a healthy version of a Subway sandwich every Monday as a way to get away from cycling. I couldn't live without the support of the Dave Rayner Fund and Pedal Potential.

What's next? My housemates have left now but I'm here until early October to get some late-season form and results. I've got one definite offer so will be back racing in Belgium next year. The season really starts at the end of February. The National Championships in June and the Val d'Aosta, a seven-day race, are two of my main targets.



Triple boost for Brit women's racing

New WorldTour could include Lincoln GP

Sophie Hurcom

Three British-based events are being planned for the UCI's new Women's WorldTour in 2016, *Cycling Weekly* understands. The Aviva Women's Tour and Prudential RideLondon GP look set to be included in the new series, a replacement for the existing World Cup, while the third could be a new women's race at the Lincoln GP.

Dan Ellmore, the new organiser at Lincoln, confirmed to *CW* that a women's road race will definitely take place next year, but added that it is still up for

discussion whether the event will feature in the new WorldTour, or run as part of the British Cycling's Women's National Road Series. The women's race will be held over a 64-mile (104.9km) course that includes five laps of the famous Michaelgate cobbled climb.

Following on from the National Championships road races held in the city this June, Lincoln's new women's road race will form part of a three-day, weekend-long festival on May 13-15, 2016. A men's and women's crit race around Castle Square, a hill-climb and sportive will also feature in the festival.

Stevens banned for 21 months

British cyclist Dan Stevens has been banned for 21 months after refusing to provide a sample in an out of competition anti-doping test, it emerged last week.

Notice of Stevens's suspension was added to the website of UK Anti-Doping on Friday, September 18. Stevens refused to give a sample for a test on January 24, 2014.

Stevens was handed a suspension of 21 months — shorter than the standard two-year period of ineligibility for a first anti-doping rule violation — because he provided testimony to the Cycling Independent Reform Commission (CIRC) which was published in March this year. His ban was backdated to

March 1 last year, meaning he is eligible to compete again on November 1.

CIRC deemed Stevens's evidence to be: "particularly valuable anti-doping relevant information," qualifying him for a reduction in his suspension under the terms of the report.

Stevens, who rode for the UK-based Neon Digital amateur team, was able to confirm his identity when contacted by *Cycling Weekly* but would not comment further on the case for legal reasons.

A UKAD spokesman confirmed to *CW* that the announcement of the suspension was made following the completion of the full legal process.

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Cycling
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THE BIG QUESTION

What's your verdict on the 2015 Vuelta a España?

Brilliant race. I enjoyed every minute of it. I was rooting for Tom Dumoulin all the way but unfortunately it wasn't to be. You had to feel for him after that final climb on the penultimate day.

John Murray

Great route, exciting racing; it is a shame that the win went to such a controversial team.

Matthew Bond

As a Spaniard, I think this year's Vuelta was disgusting. One rider in a coma, two knocked off, many injuries and some avoidable crashes. We have some of the best stages in the world, but safety should come first.

Dani Martinez Fernandez

The Vuelta this year has been controversial for safety issues and injuries; however, they did get it right in the end. Thank goodness Boeckmans is now back in Belgium, Sagan is going to the Worlds and Froomey is on the mend. For me, this Vuelta (apart from the above issues) has been the best and most exciting Grand Tour in recent years. Tom Dumoulin was on his own for the most part, competing against the rest of the peloton. He was definitely my David and not Goliath. The young talents have

shown we are going to have great cycling for years to come.

Cass Witt

Bike racing at its best. Perfect route. A cruel end for Dumoulin but that's racing. Aru: a deserving winner with a big future.

Iain Pitt

The best Grand Tour this year. That's how they all should be: jersey changing hands and unpredictable until the last proper day's racing.

Mark Bradley

I really enjoyed it, from the beginning. Totally proud of Nairo Quintana and Esteban Chaves's results. Tom Dumoulin and Chaves — almost without a team — were fighting every day at the head of the peloton and finished in the top 10. Congratulations to them! They deserve to race in better teams.

Rolando Sanchez Mora

I think the route was great but the race was made by old-school, go-for-it racing. Attack, attack, attack.

Karl Cosnett

A tour intelligently built to cause controversy and make headlines. I would say that it wasn't as successful as the



Dumoulin's fighting performance was something to root for

organisers would have hoped, as it split opinion and caused negative headlines at times (rather than emphasising the good racing). The team time trial fiasco was particularly ridiculous. I hope they go about it differently next year but I'm glad they're attempting to make the Vuelta a noticeable race.

Andrew McKenzie

More exciting than the Tour de France because the teams seem a bit more willing to attack and take risks.

Patrick Bartam

Next week's big question...

Give us your verdict on this year's Tour of Britain.

Reply to us at cycling@timeinc.com or at www.facebook.com/CyclingWeekly

Photo: Graham Watson



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Letters

Letter of the week
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Purito's prudence

STAR
LETTER

I want to root for Joaquim Rodriguez, I really do. He has come so close so many times, but never quite pulls it out. The problem is, he doesn't really deserve to win a Grand Tour.

He is the most conservative Grand Tour rider ever! I have never seen him attack outside of the final 2km! He gains a few seconds and takes the leader's jersey, but never enough to hold off the time triallists. The 2012 Giro is the perfect case in point. He was a few seconds ahead of Ryder Hesjedal on one of the hardest stages ever, the Mortirolo and the Stelvio. But J-Rod sat on Hesjedal's wheel the entire way up, letting Ryder pull for the last five kilometres, and then jumped him with 800 metres to go and gained a whopping 15 seconds. Meanwhile, Thomas de Gendt had attacked on the Mortirolo and almost stole the whole race.

The interesting thing is that Rodriguez has won the Tour of Lombardy by making bold, long range attacks. But he seems incapable of doing that in a Grand Tour.

Michael R. Elmer, email

More from the Tour

This year's Tour of Britain has been good, but seems to lack a few things.

A race running from north to south seems more logical, as regards to riders and staff, and maybe it's about time it was made a nine-day event, which would make life easier.

My own part of the world in Northamptonshire has yet to see this or the women's version. The area known as the Northamptonshire Uplands has a lot of

unclassified climbs on heavy roads and would make for some hard, exciting racing. Although some sportsives use the area, I think a major event should return to these roads again.

Mick Furn, email

Similar Storey

I have a very similar disability to Sarah Storey and my road bike set-up is the same (I can't afford electronic yet). When the first comments appeared my immediate reaction was to send a letter trying to explain on Sarah's behalf. On reflection however, it was obvious that it couldn't really be covered in a letter. I was therefore very pleased when the article came out explaining some of the problems we face.

One point that wasn't covered was that of taking a drink. While most cyclists will just grab their bottle, we have to give it some thought. Once the bottle is in our right hand we have very little control of the bike. All our braking and gears are on the right and our left side is just keeping the bike straight. We do therefore have to give it some thought so as not to be a danger to others.

Personally I will go to the back or use hills to take a drink.

However, as a last resort the only option is to get rid of the bottle as safely as possible and grab the brakes.

I think (and yes, I am biased) that Sarah Storey is among one of the very best cyclists this country has ever produced. I can say this with some authority as I know of the additional challenges she has to overcome. Her palmarès is truly amazing.

Chris Latham, email.

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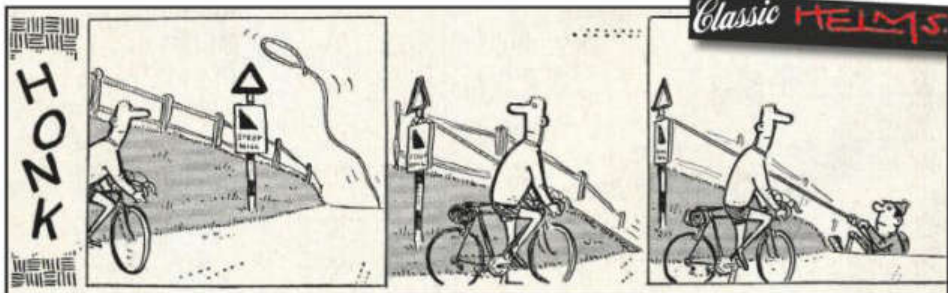
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Johnny Helms was *Cycling Weekly's* resident cartoonist from February 1946 until November 2009.

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The magic of the Galibier

The Col du Galibier is the most iconic climb of the Tour de France. What makes it so special?



Words: Richard Abraham
Photos: Daniel Gould, Getty Images,
Offside L'Equipe

Alpe d'Huez is pretty unremarkable. There, I've said it. Take away the Tour de France and it's just one of dozens of hairpin roads leading to an ugly ski resort in the French Alps, one of hundreds of roads that are famous thanks purely to professional cycling, places that we'd never know of were it not for a famous bike race. The Mur de Huy is celebrated as the finale for Flèche Wallonne, as the Poggio is for Milan-San Remo. The empty cobbled farm tracks of Belgium and Northern France are exactly that for 364 days of the year.

There are, however, a few places that have that star quality of their own. Places that you don't forget in a hurry. The Col du Galibier is one of them. The very name 'Galibier' means something significant. These days it lends itself to a cycle clothing company, a PR firm, a capital management company, a Bugatti supercar, a minimalist house track, a management consultancy in Brisbane, and a turntable manufacturer in Colorado. All of them are trying to tap into a meaningful, semi-spiritual quality of this climb, with varying degrees of success.

Reaching 2,642m in altitude, for a long time it was the undisputed

How to do it

When to go

The Col du Galibier is shut due to snow between October and late May, however, the precise times are subject to local weather. For latest openings, see savoie-route.fr

How to get there

Fly to Lyon, Geneva, Chambéry, Grenoble and Turin. Drive eight hours from Calais. Trains to St Jean de Maurienne via Chambéry (55min), Lyon (200min) and Paris (300min).

Where to stay

The Chambon tunnel remains closed for works, making ascent from Bourg d'Oisans impossible via the Col du Lautaret. The towns of St Jean and St Michel in the Maurienne valley (po. st/SJdMaurienne) and Briançon make ideal bases.

While you're there...

From St Michel de Maurienne the cols of the Iseran, Madeleine, Glandon and Croix de Fer are all within reach. From Briançon you can tackle the roads to the Col d'Izoard and Sestriere. Bourg d'Oisans and Alpe d'Huez is also nearby, though the Chambon tunnel works means access is only via the Col du Glandon and Col de le Croix de Fer.

Don't forget

It might sound obvious, but it's always cold at the top of the Galibier. The roads are also often wet with snowmelt. Take plenty of warm weather gear. And, in the words of Baz Luhrmann's 1999 hit: "wear sunscreen." The altitude and glare from the road and snow amplify the sun's strength.

physical peak of the Tour de France. A handful of Tour climbs are now higher, but none are so well renowned. While most places count the days until the return of the world's biggest bike race, the Tour itself counts down the days until it can go back to the Galibier and have a little bit of the mountain's magic sprinkled on it once again.

The highest-ever finish

The first time the Galibier featured in the Tour de France, on July 10, 1911, only three riders got their crude single-speed bikes up the sloppy track to the summit without walking. The last time the mountain appeared was in 2011, 100 years and 11 days after its debut.

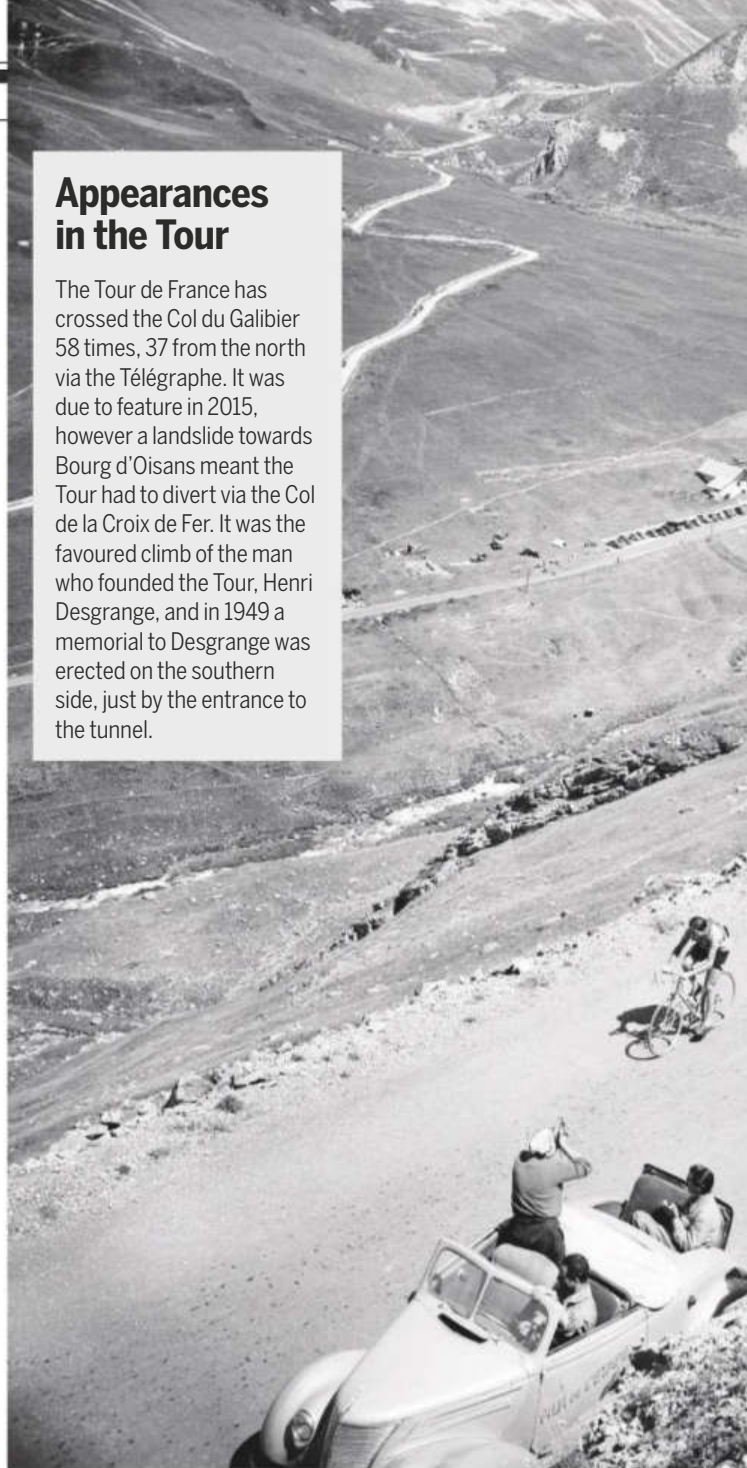
Its scale is vast. It dwarfs even the most imposing of high mountain passes elsewhere in Europe. The Col du Tourmalet is half a kilometre lower in altitude, and the climb from the bottom to the top is half as long. Alpe d'Huez is 20km shorter, and climbs just over half the vertical metres. To use a more domestic comparison, you would have to ride up Box Hill in Surrey more than 16 times to replicate the distance and vertical ascent.

There are three ways up to the top of the Galibier; all three are over 30km and include another col to climb on the way up. From Briançon or Bourg d'Oisans you head up the southern face via the Col du Lautaret (2,057m); from St Michel de Maurienne you tackle it from the north via the Col du Télégraphe (1,566m), a route that includes a morale-sapping 4km descent, forcing you to climb 165 vertical metres all over again.

One man who knows the Galibier well is Andy Schleck. Now retired, he took the most famous victory of his career in 2011 when the Tour de France finished on top of the col for

Appearances in the Tour

The Tour de France has crossed the Col du Galibier 58 times, 37 from the north via the Télégraphe. It was due to feature in 2015, however a landslide towards Bourg d'Oisans meant the Tour had to divert via the Col de la Croix de Fer. It was the favoured climb of the man who founded the Tour, Henri Desgrange, and in 1949 a memorial to Desgrange was erected on the southern side, just by the entrance to the tunnel.



the first, and so far only, time in its history. It remains the Tour's highest ever summit finish.

"You don't find any other climb that is comparable to Galibier," he tells *Cycling Weekly*. "You are so, so high up. It's not like one of these climbs where you look up and see the trees above you, you just go up and it's like you're riding into the sky.

"And then when you are at

the top there is hardly any space; hardly space for a finish line, no barriers, just a small epic road that goes up there. The scenery and the small roads going to the top so high up is what makes it, for me, the most beautiful climb in France."

One of the best pure climbers of his generation, Schleck conquered the Galibier on stage 18 of that year's Tour with a long-range solo move



d'Huez in 1952 (pictured left). It was where Marco Pantani made his Tour-winning move in 1998, a little speck of yellow and celeste in the sodden gloom, gliding up as others wallowed. A memorial now marks where he put in his attack. As Schleck neared the summit, the world's greatest ever cyclist, Eddy Merckx, pulled up alongside him in an official vehicle.

"He spoke French to me, I remember that, and he said 'ça c'est incroyable', which means what you're doing is unbelievable, and just keep going. Of course when someone like Eddy Merckx tells you something like that you don't need to answer.

"I remember the last two kilometres I was completely out of energy but still I managed to fight to the top, but that was pure willpower. I would lie to you if I said I had good legs."

A long slog to the top

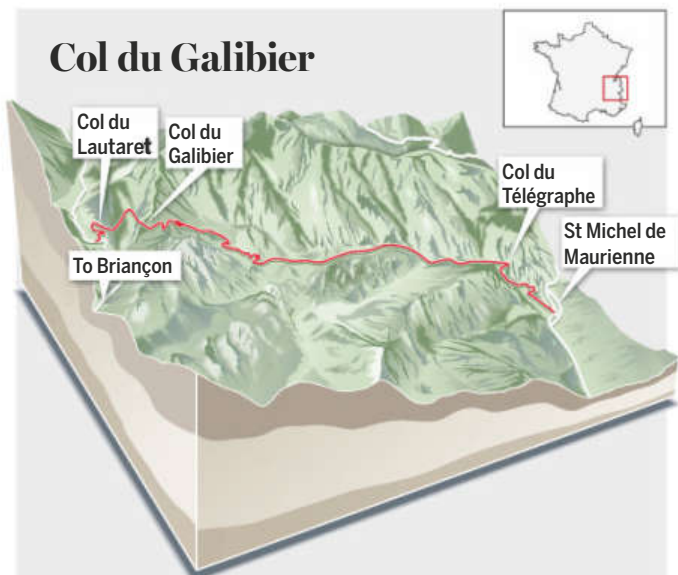
It's easy for the scale of the Galibier to obfuscate just how hard it is. On the tougher, more famous north side, which has featured most often in the Tour de France, it's 100 metres shy of 35km in length. The average gradient is only 5.5 per cent, but that includes the downhill section from the summit of the Télégraphe into Valloire. In total there is 17km of climbing at over seven per cent.

But you can't think about the numbers. Doing so never makes you feel any better. Riding it is arduous; all you can do is look around you and soak up the experience. From the north, the valley is an empty cauldron of cold mountain air, too high for trees and too high for permanent habitation. The only noise comes from a few birds, a handful of insects, and the odd marmot, which lend their name to the famous 'Marmotte' mountain sportive, which tackles the Galibier after the Col de la Croix de Fer and

from over 60km out, cresting the Col d'Izoard before dropping down into Briançon and tackling the Lautaret and Galibier, two cols he says go together "like gin and tonic".

Even before the benefit of hindsight, it had the trappings of a ride that would go down in the history books. The Galibier is good at that. It hosted Fausto Coppi's career-defining solo move on the way to the first ever summit finish at Alpe

Col du Galibier

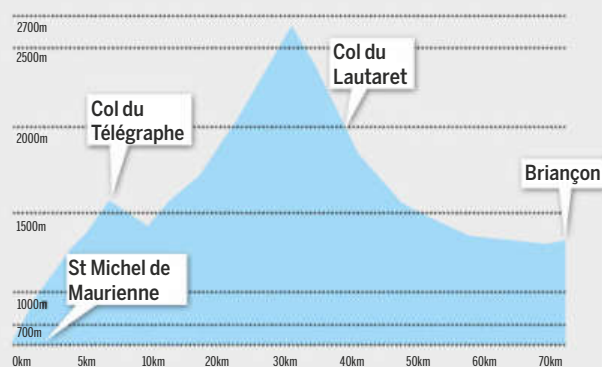


From St Michel de Maurienne

34.9km	1,924m	5.5%	12%
Length	Height gain	Average gradient	Max gradient

From Briançon

36.3km	1,438m	4.0%	10%
Length	Height gain	Average gradient	Max gradient



before a finish at Alpe d'Huez.

On a good day it's a remarkably silent environment. The snow around the peaks is draped over scree slopes and billiard table grass meadows, shimmering like silk. Names of former riders on the tarmac bear testament in resilient paint to the enthusiastic fans and former riders, like a roll of honour. One particularly well-equipped fanatic has ensured that his or her trip to the Tour in the 1990s, and the participation

of Telekom domestique Udo Bölts, won't be forgotten for a while. However, the rough edges of the road surface and the rusting barns that look like they've been plucked from the dustbowl of a John Steinbeck novel but are full of local Beaufortain cheese, evidently suffer much less friendly weather when winter draws in.

In a race it's a climb that can offer generous rewards to a rider with bravado, but it's naïve to believe you've

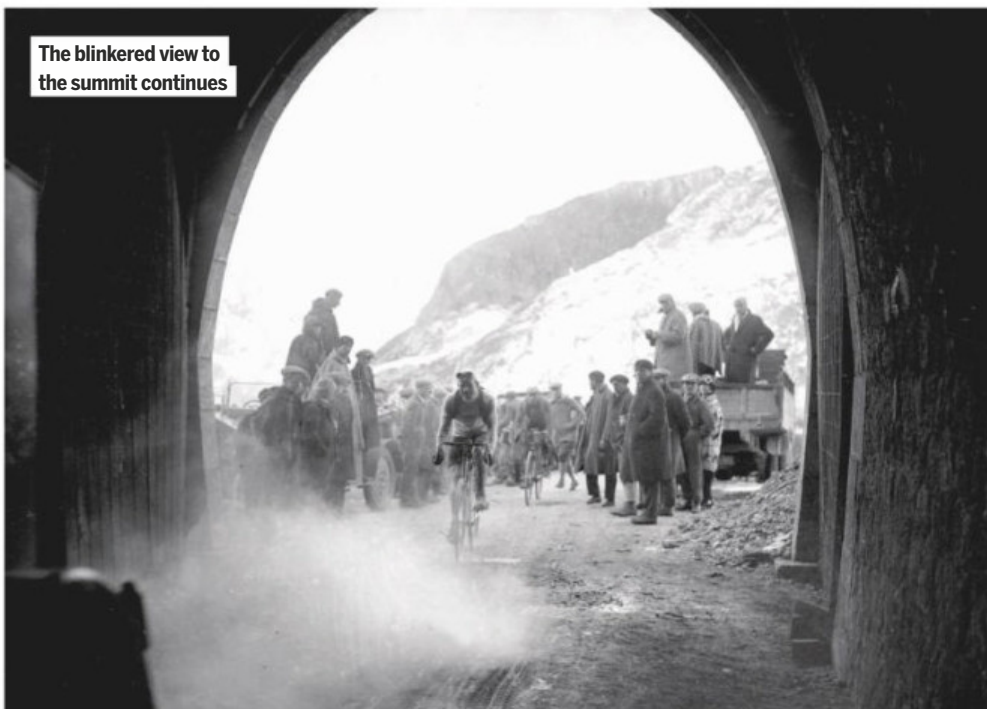
Cycling

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The blinkered view to the summit continues



The Galibier tunnel

Opened in 1891 and standing at an altitude of 2,556m, this dank 355m passageway with its thick, soggy wooden doors used to be the only way across the Galibier.

In 1911 the first Tour rider over the top, Emile Georget, remarked that they should have just tunnelled from the bottom and saved everyone the hours of climbing.

It has featured in the Tour de France, however, cyclists are not permitted to ride through it as general traffic. Which is fine, because who would ride up here and miss out on the final push to the top?

ever got the measure of the Janus-faced Galibier. Less than 24 hours after his heroics on stage 18, Schleck experienced the other side of the mountain. He followed an early move by Alberto Contador when the race headed back over the climb, this time via the Col du Télégraphe on a short stage to Alpe d'Huez. It backfired; the pair didn't have enough time at the summit and the efforts meant Schleck couldn't distance Cadel Evans on the Alpe. He took the yellow jersey, but without enough of a lead going into the final time trial on Evans, who would go on to win the Tour.

"I mean it was definitely a good move," Schleck remembers. "But maybe it was also the move where I lost the Tour, you know, you can see both sides.

"I knew I was going to take it [yellow], but following Contador on the Télégraphe was maybe not the smartest move."

The hardest day

By the time Schleck and Contador passed through the tunnel at the top (see

box) on stage 19, they had been climbing for just over 80 minutes, at full pelt. For amateur riders, the climb takes more like two hours. In one ascent your heart will beat over 20,000 times and at 90rpm you'll make over 10,000 pedal strokes. Even the descent, which is technical, fast and sweeping, is ultimately too long to be fully enjoyable. Returning through Valloire you have to climb for 4km; dropping down to Briançon and Bourg d'Oisans, the road is too shallow to freewheel.

Riding up is a case of sticking well within your limits on the lower slopes until the duration, the gradient, and the altitude do their work on your legs. Cruelly, from both sides, the final 10km are the steepest just as you begin to ride through the 2,000m barrier where the effects of altitude really begin to kick in. Breathing up at that height is like sipping chilled single malt whisky through a straw. The sharp, precious drops very quickly leave your head spinning. Any extra strength — the little kick you always have for the club run

sprint — has been left behind somewhere on the way up. Returning to lower altitude where the air is warm, thick and damp is like gorging on tomato soup.

"It is never fun, it doesn't matter from which side, it's always hard," says Sky's Bernie Eisel, very much a *rouleur* rather than a *grimpeur*. "Especially if you do Télégraphe, it's always a long valley before [from Valloire] and you just don't make up time."

On that 18th stage in 2011, 36 minutes behind Schleck the gruppetto of dropped riders had swelled to 87 members. It was so big that, although they all missed the time cut, organisers had no choice but to leave them in the race. Marcel Sieberg was the last rider to cross the line.

"Ninety per cent of days like that I'm suffering, and I delete the bad moments from my memory as fast as possible," Sieberg recalls.

"For the riders in the gruppetto it's one of the hardest climbs, especially if you're in a small group," adds Eisel. "And if you do it in the Tour on short

days, there is no gruppetto. Everybody is riding on their own. That 2011 stage was one of my hardest days in my life."

A must-do

All this begs the obvious question: why would anyone want to do it at all? Well, try to explain to your non-cycling friends what it is that you enjoy about climbing up hills and putting yourself through hours of discomfort. It's not particularly logical, but there's nothing else like it.

All we can say is this: climb that final stretch of road that clings to a foamy white tip of a wave of rock. Ride over the top, towards a valley dozens of kilometres away from your starting point, and look down on another world where the light and the landscape are totally different.

It is one of those places you will never forget. Whether you have thousands of fans cheering you on or not, it's something every cyclist must do at least once in their lives. Ride up the Col du Galibier and let a little bit of its magic rub off on you too. ■



Michal Kwiatkowski: my year as world champ

The 24-year-old's all-round ability helped him slip the pack to take an epic solo World Championship win in Ponferrada last year. He spoke to *CW* about life with the rainbow bands and his imminent title defence

Hugh Gladstone

When Michael Kwiatkowski slipped away for a solo victory at last year's World Championship road race in Ponferrada, Spain, he was widely regarded as a rider worthy of the stripes. Although just 24 years of age at the time, the Pole had already shown himself as a talented all-rounder who can do everything from win in the hills, power through time trials and be an essential component at the sharp end of Mark Cavendish's lead-out train. An opportunist with a turn of speed that can nail group sprints and leave others for dead with uphill attacks, he also has remarkable racing nous.

While his first outing in the rainbow jersey at last year's Il Lombardia was a modest ride to 77th place, he hit the 2015 season with a streak of performances that befitted his title. A strong showing in the time trial stage of January's Tour de San Luis preceded second overall behind Geraint Thomas at the Tour of the Algarve before he claimed his first season win in the prologue time trial at Paris-Nice. But it wasn't until Amstel Gold in mid-April that Kwiatkowski actually claimed his first victory in the champion's jersey — a garment a rider is only permitted to wear in the discipline in which they won it.

Although he's collected a total of 20 individual top 10 places this year, Amstel was as good as it got. As he now heads into Sunday's World Championship road race in Richmond, USA, with a raft of rivals lining up to take the jersey off him, we sat down with Kwiatkowski to look back over his year in rainbow stripes and see how he fancies his chances of keeping them.

CW So Michal, you've been racing in the world champion's jersey for a year. Has it been a good one?

MK Yeah... it wasn't as good as last year but it was an amazing feeling racing in the rainbow jersey. It got a bit difficult later in the season though.

CW Why? Because there was pressure to perform?

MK Yes, but I think it was pressure I put on myself.

CW Did riders treat you differently this year because you had the world champion's jersey on?

MK Of course my team-mates made some jokes, saying that I thought I was at another level. But it's nice riding in the rainbow jersey with guys who've also been world champions: people like Cav, Tony [Martin] and [Tom] Boonen. I got a lot of support from them. From other riders in the bunch, wearing the jersey made things a bit more difficult.

CW How so? Because everybody's looking out for you? You're more visible when you attack?

MK Yeah — but that's not the biggest problem.

CW What is the biggest problem?

MK The form was not so good after some of the early season races. I was in pretty good shape at the start of the year but I made a mistake. I did a lot in the first part of the season and I

thought a break in May would do me good. But it's probably not the best idea. You go down a level and you don't really find the freshness. I've learned a lesson there.

CW Which is what?

MK In the future I need a programme with the best balance of racing and resting rather than doing too much then trying to take a break to recover.

CW Right, OK. But you've had some highlights too. What really stands out for you?

MK Winning Amstel Gold. The first part of the season was just amazing. It felt great. I was able to compete. I was riding like a world champion should — showing off the stripes. Then I went to the Tour looking for stage wins and doing my bit for the team. I wasn't at the level to get any wins but it was good with Cav, [Zdenek] Stybar and Tony taking stages.

CW You've said you can't talk about where you'll be riding next year, but you clearly like the company you keep at Etixx. Can you tell us why you're moving on?

MK I'm very thankful for what Etixx-Quick Step has done for me for the last few years. I've had a lot of support and the team spirit there is great. But I really want to move forward and push to be a better rider. I need to take another step.

CW Do you mean there are too many riders with whom you have to share

leadership in your current team? Or do you mean you need a team with a different background, a different approach to things?

MK We had a lot of possible winners at Etixx but we'd always just ride for the guy who's in the best shape. I think a different background at a team can help you change as a rider. Working with different people, you can learn a lot and be inspired.

CW Of course the season's not all over yet. What's your approach to the Worlds?

MK I'm due to ride the team time trial, but I'll skip the individual to have more time to prepare for the road race. I've been doing the team time trial since we won the Florence Worlds [in 2013] and it's amazing to be part of that. It's a real bonding thing: we like winning and it's so nice when you can all share a victory.

CW And the road race in Richmond — is it a course you can defend the jersey on?

MK I don't know it that well. I've seen a couple of things from YouTube, and had some feedback back from Cav [who recce'd the course earlier in the season]. But I'll have a bit of time to check out the course leading up to the race. It was similar in Ponferrada. If you're there for the team time trial, you have lots of opportunity to study it.

"I want to move forward and be a better rider. I need to take another step"



CW But you're a pretty versatile rider anyway. You go well in hilly races, have a decent sprint and know how to seize opportunities. From past experience, do you think most World Championships courses suit you?

MK Of course, I like Classics. I really like the kind of racing that you get stuck into. Road World Championship courses are always similar to a Classic so I think I can go for it.

Profile

Michal Kwiatkowski

Born: Chelmza, Poland

Age: 25

Major wins:

2015

■ Amstel Gold

■ Paris-Nice prologue TT

2014

■ World Championship RR

■ Tour of Britain stage four

■ Polish Championship TT

■ Tour of Romandy prologue TT

■ Strade Bianche

■ Tour of the Algarve overall and two stages

■ Tramuntana Trophy (Challenge Majorca)

2013

■ Polish RR championships

2012

■ Three days of West Flanders prologue TT

Comparative stats

Race victories* during their reign as world champion

2014: Michal Kwiatkowski **2**

2013: Rui Costa **2**

2012: Philippe Gilbert **1**

2011: Mark Cavendish **15**

2010: Thor Hushovd **5**

2009: Cadel Evans **2**

2008: Alessandro Ballan **2**

2007: Paolo Bettini **5**

2006: Paolo Bettini **3**

2005: Tom Boonen **20**

*UCI classified road race and individual time trials

CW You've talked about struggling with form. How is it now ahead of the Worlds?

MK You know, I've had some difficulties there so I've had to work a lot. After the Tour, I went to the Tour of Poland. Maybe that was not the best idea but I wanted to pay back all the fans who supported me. I also spent 16 days at an altitude training camp in Livigno. I raced in Belgium and France and then came here to North America. The GP de Montréal was maybe the hardest race of the year because of the weather. I was really motivated because it was my last

race in the rainbow jersey but what really matters in the Canadian races is how your legs are in the last few kilometres. I hope they're getting there.

CW So you're shaping up. Who would you look out for as other key contenders at the Worlds?

MK I could see [Alexander] Kristoff or [Michael] Matthews as favourites for such a course. Kristoff's been very strong this year. The Belgians always have lots of star riders. But I think Australia might be the strongest team. ■



Kwiatkowski celebrates his Amstel Gold win

Amstel masterclass

In one of his monthly columns for *Cycle Sport* earlier this season, photographer Graham Watson described Kwiatkowski in his world champion's jersey as "a photographer's delight, attacking whenever the road rises up, giving it his all to win, with no thought to what happens if he loses".

But as far as the Pole himself is concerned, it will be the image of him with his arms up ahead of a small bunch on a spring afternoon in the Netherlands that he savours the most from his year spent in the rainbow jersey. The way Kwiatkowski took the victory in Amstel Gold says a lot about his racing instinct. In contrast to Watson's observation from France, his only win wearing the world champ's jersey

was the product of a finely measured ride when the fireworks went off on the final climb of the Cauberg. While eventual third place finisher Michael Matthews dug deep to follow the attack of Philippe Gilbert, Kwiatkowski played a game that kept his rivals at striking distance but kept his powder dry for the sprint. As a chase group started to form around him on the flat section at the top of the climb, he offered a masterclass in riding the wheels.

Watch the replay and it might look like he's starting his sprint from too far back. But it was with such fluidity, speed and opportunist thinking that Kwiatkowski moved, he almost made his win ahead of Alejandro Valverde and Matthews look easy.

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The Official Review £20.00



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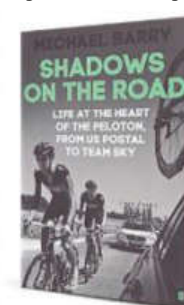


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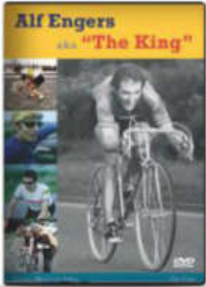
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Dispatches from the 101st Tour de France 101 Damnations is a chance to relive the 2014 race, stage for stage, fall after fall, tantrum by tantrum; just the good bits mind, without all the aerial shots of castles. Or sunflowers.

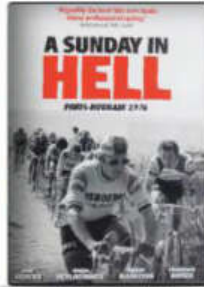
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Packed with rare film footage of the time, extended interviews with Engers today, this film gives us an unforgettable portrait of a great rider, and of a vanished era in the sport of time-trialling. For those with memories of those years, and for all those who care about the history of Cycle Sport, this film is a must.

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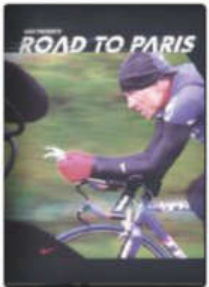
1976 Paris- Roubaix
A psychological and dramatic study of the battle between some of the greatest legends of the sport. Eddy Merckx, Roger De Vlaeminck, Freddy Maertens and Francesco Moser all participated in the 1976 Paris-Roubaix, but the star of the film is the race itself.

Battle of the Bikes/ On Yer Bike £19.99



Battle of the Bikes compares Graeme Obree, who built his own bike out of washing machine parts and rode it in his own unique crouched position to become the World Hour Record hour. **On Yer Bike** is an intimate portrait of Obree from an amateur cyclist to World Hour Record holder.

Road To Paris £19.99



Documentary that covers Lance Armstrong and the 2001 US Postal Service Team over the course of 27 days in April as they prepare to win a third consecutive TDF. Neverbeforeseen footage takes you inside team meetings and in the team car during cycling's greatest races, including a down to- the wire Amstel Gold and the hellish Paris-Roubaix.

Racing Is My Life £18.99



The Beryl Burton story
Racing is Life... anything else before or after is just waiting', Steve McQueen from the film 'Le mans'. A quote that sums up Beryl Burton, the Yorkshire housewife, who despite a severe illness in childhood, became a cycling phenomenon, the most successful British female cyclist ever.

Stars and Watercarriers/ The Impossible Hour £22.49



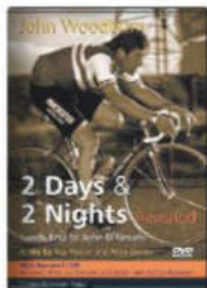
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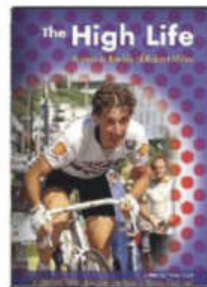
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Direct-mount brakes: fad or the future?

Caliper rim brakes are very good, road disc brakes are gaining in popularity, so is there room for direct-mount brakes, asks *Matt Lamy*

Every bike manufacturer worth its salt has launched an 'aero' road bike in the last few years. Typically that means a frame with svelte, kammtailed tubes, a rear wheel cutout, internal cabling, and 'direct-mount' or 'post-mount' brakes that are attached directly to either side of the fork or stay via two posts. This last ingredient certainly looks aesthetically pleasing, but do direct-mount brakes actually provide any practical benefit?

Specialized's David Alexander says they require extra considerations by frame designers: "The design criteria for post-mount brakes, needing the two posts on there, does change the style of how you would create a frame. And of course you have to consider where you'd want to stick them on the frame.

"For the rear brake it would sometimes be pretty difficult to put them on the seatstays, which is why you find so many post-mounted rear brakes under the chainstays," he says.

"On a bike that doesn't need to do a lot of braking that position under

the chainstays is OK. But when there have been investigations into the most performance-orientated position of brakes on a frame, it's been found that underneath the chainstays is pretty much the worst place for a rear brake.

He adds: "Fitting a rear brake underneath the chainstays has the effect of the wheel trying to rip the rear brake off the mounts. At least if you put the brakes at the top of the seatstays, the wheel is only trying to push the brakes into the seatstays, which is impossible."

Aero possibility

What about aero benefit? "That area around the bottom bracket has been looked at by our team in the wind tunnel and it's actually not as dirty an area for air flow as first thought," Alexander says.

"The chainrings and cranks are moving, but they're either side of the chainstays. So it might be beneficial to have a really clean area down there, but that's disrupted by putting a brake there.

"The only way post-mount brakes could really have an aero advantage

Direct mount brakes require an altered frame design

would be if they were 100 per cent integrated and fitted in line with your fork blades or stays. You'd need to completely hide them and almost make them part of the frame."

Some bike makers have taken almost a proprietary route to post-mount brakes, such as Fuji, which lobbied Shimano to make seatstay-positioned direct-mount brakes for its new Transonic aero bike.

"I know some of the people at Shimano

Yes



Steven Fairchild

Fuji Bikes global product manager

"Direct-mount brakes are fractionally more aerodynamic because they sit closer

to the frame, and they are more efficient because they help to get rid of redundant material in the frame design. Shimano hasn't come out with any performance figures, but I'd say they must be stronger and stiffer than regular caliper brakes, too. Does that translate into an obvious benefit for the rider? I really can't say, but logically they have to be stronger and stiffer."

No



David Alexander

Specialized Bicycle Components University, Body Geometry FIT expert

"Post-mount brakes may be fractionally

better than existing caliper brakes in terms of power, but they're not really any better for all-weather ability, they're not really much better from an aero standpoint; and they're not really much better in terms of power modulation. We do have post-mount brakes on a couple of our bikes and as a brand we certainly would never say no to any type of braking system, but we think road disc is the way forward."



— I used to race with one of their product guys — and he agreed with me about this, so Shimano started the development of a seatstay direct-mount brake,” Steven Fairchild, Fuji Bikes global product manager says.

Stronger and stiffer

“What they did was to take the front direct-mount brake, turn it around, put a stronger spring in it, and then put it through their testing and stress analysis.

“Looking at the way these brakes mount directly to the frame removes redundant material on the brake and it’s a more efficient system. It’s stiffer and since it fits closer to the frame it’s more aerodynamic. Shimano hasn’t come out with any performance figures, but I’d say they must be stronger and stiffer than regular caliper brakes.”

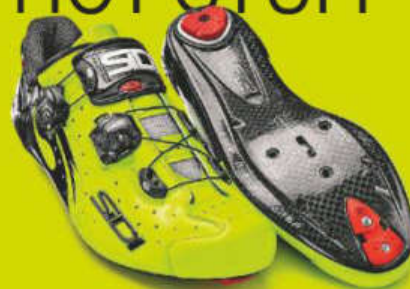
However, Fairchild isn’t convinced by chainstay-mounted brake systems. “I don’t think that’s a very good place

to mount a brake on a road bike. It does make the bike look cleaner, but I’m a form over function guy, and from a functional standpoint the chainstay-mounted brake just doesn’t make a lot of sense.”

OUR TAKE

Direct-mount brakes might be a great idea, but they’re coming at a time when a lot of their claimed benefits will be trumped by disc brakes. To make the most of direct-mount brakes, manufacturers have to radically alter frame designs. Fuji has done this successfully with the Transonic. However, we think many brands that fit direct-mount brakes at the chainstay are doing it for trend or marketing reasons. It’s a trend that may well disappear as road discs become more prevalent.

HOT STUFF



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Famously worn by Chris Froome en route to Tour de France glory, the Wire has an excellent reputation. Even though these shoes match our column nicely, they are available in other colourways too. £350

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Report: November

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“energy-sapping overheating”. €159

www.x-bionic.co.uk

Report: October



Rapha Pro Team Data Print rain gilet

This is a stripped-down take on the popular Race Cape and utilises the same poly laminate waterproof fabric that is race-proven by Sky. Just arrived is this version in Rapha’s popular Data Print. It is designed to be easily stuffed in a pocket. £140

www.rapha.cc

Report: October



PowerTap P1 pedal power meter £999

PowerTap's pedal-based power meter is excellent. I cannot stress highly enough that the ease of installation of this product is vastly superior to that of other meters, and did not require any specific torque or tools to set up. This makes it the easiest power meter on the market to swap between bikes.

Left/right measurement is accurate, with the pedals also providing cadence too. Considering these pedals have a power meter built into them, they are still only slightly heavier than a pair of top of the market Dura-Ace pedals (which weigh 270g), and once riding the extra grams are barely noticeable.

My test rides have involved all sorts of riding in all sorts of conditions, including torrential downpours, and the pedals have performed superbly throughout. The battery is AAA and lasts around 60 hours, and they are robust, accurate and easy to use. The only downside is that they are probably over most people's budget. *Oliver Bridgewood* **437g**
www.paligap.com



9



Hed Ardennes Black tubeless-ready wheels £1,100

The Ardennes Black has replaced the Ardennes Plus FR, making it the top model in the Hed Ardennes line. I have been running them with a tubeless set-up, making for a comfortable ride that is complemented by the 'Black Sonic Hubs'. They are light, bombproof and the braking is the best on any clinchers I have used. This is thanks to Hed's 'Turbine Braking Technology' machined surface, which it claims offers "70 per cent shorter stopping distances in wet conditions." I can confirm that the wet braking was superb. Probably the best sportive/training wheels you can buy, if a little pricey.

Oliver Bridgewood **1,430g**
www.hedwheels.com

9

NopinZ SuperSuit £199.99

The SuperSuit incorporates NopinZ's Speedpocket number system. You slide your number into the pocket from within the suit — I suggest you do this before putting on your suit. This means you don't need pins, which over time can damage your suit, while it is also claimed the Speedpocket can save you towards 10 watts compared to a poorly pinned on number.

I enjoyed racing in the Speedsuit. It was figure-hugging without being too restrictive, the silicon power bands were effective grippers on the legs and arms, and it felt fast.

My only real concerns were that I found the legs to be a bit too long and some people may not like the Italian ink wet-look finish.

Christopher Hovendon **250g**
www.nopinZ.com



8

Parentini Mossa £175

The Mossa is a water resistant, breathable jacket in the mould of the Castelli Gabba and it is made of a three-layer laminate with a waterproof breathable membrane.

Featuring three rear pockets and an extended tail to protect from road spray, the jacket also has strategically placed reflective details. The overall quality of the garment is very good.

Having tested it in poor weather, water resistance is good, but the Mossa suffered with regards to fit. The cut was too short on the waist and jacket had a tendency to ride up as I rode, rendering the tail useless. The cut also resulted in bunching of excess material on the chest. It was not as breathable as the Gabba either. *Oliver Bridgewood* **288g**

www.zettadistribution.com



6



Product of the week

BBB Innershield gloves £9.95

According to BBB: "ceramic powder nano particles incorporated into the fabric of these gloves reflect Far InfraRed rays emitted by the body. This improves metabolism and increases blood flow." Make of that marketing spiel what you will, what is certain is that these inner gloves are hard to fault.

The seamless construction is comfortable and the long cuff is great under winter gloves on very cold days. It's as inner gloves that these really shine, offering an extra bit of protection when the temperature plummets.

For less than a tenner too, it's hard to complain. *Henry Robertshaw* **34g**

www.windwave.co.uk

10



Pearl Izumi Women's Elite Road IV shoes £149.99

The Elite Road sits at the top of Pearl Izumi's road shoe tree, having been designed to be efficient and aerodynamic. When on, the sole was stiff and gave a sense of direct drive between shoe and pedal.

The Boa closures make for an even pressure distribution across the mid-foot, allowing for perfect micro-adjustment. However, I struggled to tighten the toe box Velcro closure quite enough across my narrow forefoot, although Pearl Izumi do say that this man-made upper should soften over time.

One of the slickest pairs of women's race shoes I've seen in a long time.

Hannah Bussey **244g (per shoe)**

www.madison.co.uk

9



Scott RC ProTec jersey £89.99

If you've recently become closely acquainted with the tarmac after a little spill, then this Scott jersey may be for you — its fabric is made from carbon yarns and ceramic printing, which claims to prevent road rash. Unfortunately for you but fortunately for me, I haven't tested this jersey to its full potential yet by crashing, but can at least report that it is an excellent jersey nonetheless.

The fit is spot-on, with minimal flap at the front or shoulders, while it's nice and breathable for warm weather riding. My only criticism is that the pockets are placed a bit high, making it tricky to get stuff out on the move, although you do get a very good water-resistant zipped security pocket.

Henry Robertshaw

144g

www.scott-sports.com

9

LONG TERM TEST

Two months later

Lazer Z1 helmet £199

I was initially really impressed with the look of this high-end Lazer helmet. However, after seeing a few race pictures of myself wearing it I'm not so sure, as it looked much bulkier on my head than it did when it was sat on my desk. That said, the retention system is excellent and ventilation also good. *HR*

www.madison.co.uk

7



Lazer Z1: better off than on?

Can't live without

SiS GO Electrolyte Lemon & Lime drink £23.39 1.6kg

If you are struggling to find a palatable electrolyte drink I highly recommend this offering from SiS. It is easy to make up and I found getting the right concentration straightforward, while it kept me well hydrated on all of my rides throughout the summer. *CH*

www.scienceinsport.com



SiS Go: instant hydration in a sachet

Lapierre Aircode 500 FDJ £3,099

Tested by: Oliver Bridgewood | Miles ridden: 487 |
Size tested: 55cm | Weight: 7.62kg

Mention the French city of Dijon and most people think of mustard. However, Dijon doesn't only produce one of the world's finest condiments; it is also the home of Lapierre bikes. The brand has considerable heritage too, having been designing and

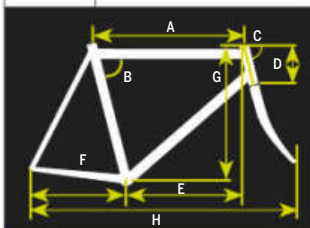
assembling bikes in Dijon since 1946.

On the racing scene, the company has enjoyed a successful relationship with FDJ, having sponsored the pro team for the last 14 years. The Aircode is the aerobike at the disposal of the FDJ squad and has been ridden to victories by the likes of Thibaut Pinot and Arnaud Démare.

Lapierre Aircode 500 FDJ £3,099

Frame	■■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
Specification	■■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Ride	■■■■■■■■■■■	6/10
Value	■■■■■■■■■■■	8/10

Distributor	www.lapierre-bikes.co.uk
Frame	Lapierre Aircode Carbon
Fork	Lapierre Aircode Carbon
Size range	XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL
Weight	7.62kg
Groupset	Shimano Dura-Ace/Ultegra
Alterations	Knight 65 carbon clinchers
Gear ratios	53/39t, 11-25t
Wheels	Mavic Kysrium Equipe
Tyres	Mavic Yksion Comp 23mm
Bar	Zipp Service Course SL 80 Beyond Black
Stem	ZIPP Service Course
Seatpost	Lapierre carbon FDJ
Saddle	Fizik Antares



SIZE TESTED: M

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
57cm	73°	72.5°	17cm	39.1cm	40.8cm	56.7cm	987mm

Frame

The Aircode frame is described as manifesting the best possible combination of rigidity, weight and aerodynamics. The down tube and seat tube feature Kamm-Tail profiles. It is claimed that these cross-sections provide the drag-reducing benefits of an aerofoil, while slicing off the trailing edge reduces weight. Lapierre claims that this also improves crosswind performance by eliminating the turbulence associated with a traditional trailing edge. Internal cable routing, an integrated stem and seat clamp add further to the aerodynamic credentials.

The front brake is direct-mount, offering increased power modulation and, reportedly, superior aerodynamics. The rear brake is a standard caliper, mounted on the seatstays. A bottom-bracket-mounted brake can be more aerodynamic; however, Lapierre's road bike designer Rémi Gribaudo told me that

“a bottom-bracket-mounted brake makes the layout around the bottom bracket more complicated; it is not as practical for maintenance, and wheel removal is not as easy. We spoke a lot to the FDJ team, and it is what they wanted.”

Visually, it is stunning. Fit some deep-section wheels and you have a machine that really stands apart from the hordes of matte black carbon bikes. The gloss finish is easy to keep clean too.

Specification

The components are a combination of Shimano Dura-Ace and Ultegra 11-speed. The chainset and rear derailleur are Dura-

Ace, while the shifters, chain, cassette and front derailleur are Ultegra. When considering the retail price of £3,099, we are happy to see the bike specced with some top-end Dura-Ace components. Our test bike came with a standard 53/39t chainset, hinting towards its credentials as a racing machine. The cassette is available as 11-25t (pictured on our test bike) or 11-28t.

The brakes are unusual; the rear is a standard Shimano Ultegra caliper, while the front is an Ultegra direct-mount caliper. The seatpost bolt is neatly tucked away under a rubber cover, which can be seen in the above picture — a





A stunning racing bike that's sure to stand out



Dura-Ace is teamed with Ultegra



Comes with FDJ's stamp of approval

said, it still doesn't feel as fast as the aforementioned Reacto and S5.

Climbing is great, for an aerobike, it is light (our size 55cm tips the *Cycling Weekly* scales at 7.62kg without pedals) and the frame is uncompromisingly stiff. The downside of this is a chattery ride on any road surface that is less than perfect. You feel road buzz and bumps especially through the aluminium Zipp handlebar. I would personally swap this out.

It may not be suited to poor road surfaces, but I did have the joy of blasting the Aircode around some smooth criterium circuits, a place where it felt right at home.

Value

A retail price of £3,099 is very respectable for an aero bike featuring a mixture of Ultegra and Dura-Ace components, especially when you consider that the frame is the same as that used by professionals. The wheels are robust, if unremarkable, and I suspect they have been specified to keep within the £3,000 price point while using quality components and frame.

Verdict

All bikes seem to look better with deep wheels; without them, aero bikes like this look famished and skeletal. They need the deeper rim to balance out the visual proportions of the deeper tubes. Deep wheels also hold high speed better. To do the Aircode justice, you need to budget for a set.

If you are looking for a beautiful, thoroughbred racing machine, this bike is a great option, but for all-round riding and comfort, I would suggest you look elsewhere. The ride is harsh and not especially

enjoyable on rough surfaces; however, for racing or riding on nice roads, the Aircode flies.

7

For

- Ideal for criteriums
- Good spec for price
- Looks (when paired with deep wheels)

Against

- Uncomfortable, uncompromising ride
- Lots of road buzz
- Doesn't feel as fast as other aero bikes

nice design feature. The bars and stem are Zipp Service Course, and while they are not the lightest components, they are strong and of high quality. It should also be pointed out that Lapierre offers custom build options.

Mavic Kysrium Equipe wheels with Mavic Yksion tyres complete the package. Despite being relatively heavy and not aerodynamic in the slightest, this wheelset is reliable and should be seen as a solid pair of training hoops.

Riding

When you hop aboard aero

bikes such as the Merida Reacto, Canyon Aeroad, or Cervélo S5, they instantly feel fast and like they are giving you a bit of extra speed. I didn't really get this sensation when I first rode the Aircode, but I suspected that this was in part down to the wheels — the Mavic Kysrium Equipes are not very aero.

As such, I switched the wheels for some Knight 65 carbon clinchers. The result? The bike was transformed in terms of ride and aesthetics. If you want to do this bike any justice, you need to get some deep-section wheels on it. That

Aero wheels

Henry Robertshaw tests five deep-section wheelsets to find out which satisfy his need for speed

What?

Aero wheels are a great upgrade to any bike. Finding the right set involves choosing between rim depths and profiles, spoke counts, and deciding whether to opt for clincher or tubular. I've chosen clinchers, a rim depth between 50mm and 80mm and a typical upgrade price bracket of £1,000 to £2,000.

Why?

Generally an aero wheel of 50mm plus will give you an advantage, aerodynamically, though getting these up to speed, slowing them down and dealing with them from day-to-day is where we start to find the difference. The most expensive doesn't necessarily mean the best and I will need to compare type of rim carbon for brake performance, spoke patterns for strength, type of hub and most importantly the overall weight.

How?

Evening 10s have been the testing ground for these wheels, broadly to compare performance gains. However, most will need to live with these wheels and so I've also been putting in the miles over various terrains with various pads, and, most importantly, in different wind conditions to see which would be best to live with — remember those valve extenders!



HOW WE SCORE

- 10 - Superb, best in its class and we couldn't fault it.
- 9 - Excellent, a slight change and it would be perfect
- 8 - Brilliant, we'd happily buy it
- 7 - Solid, but there's better out there
- 6 - Pretty good, but not quite hitting the mark
- 5 - OK, nothing wrong with it, but nothing special
- 4 - A few niggles let this down
- 3 - Disappointing
- 2 - Poor, approach with caution
- 1 - Terrible, do not buy this product

Zipp 404 Firestrike Carbon Clincher £2,070

The words 'Zipp' and 'high-end wheels' have a long association with each other, and these new 404 Firestrikes, of which only 404 pairs are being made available to the public, look set to extend the relationship. The best thing about these wheels is their performance in crosswinds. In blustery conditions these are the most stable deep section wheels I've ever ridden and even lightweight climbers should be able to control the 404s in crosswinds thanks to the U-shaped rim.

Like most of the wheels on test, there was little in the way of flex and brake rub was minimal, even when flinging the bike from side-to-side in an enthusiastic sprint. However, I did feel a little more of rough roads than I

would have liked — these wheels are clearly built for speed, not comfort, despite its rim width (26.53mm).

But get them up to speed and they really come into their own. The 58mm rim might be below average depth for this test but they still hold their speed very well during steady efforts.

A concern was the braking performance in wet conditions, where the Zipp's don't set themselves apart from

the usual stereotype for carbon wheels. A little drizzle didn't have much of an effect, but on my one foray into the middle of a racing bunch in heavy rain I found myself reaching for the brake levers a good second earlier than I would have with the FFWDs.

Weight
1,750g
with skewers

8

Weight: front: 790g, rear: 960g Rim depth: 58mm
www.fisheroutdoor.co.uk



FFWD F6R Full Carbon Clincher DT240 £1,570

If you're after some aero wheels to ride all summer long in all but the hilliest terrain, then the FFWD F6Rs are the wheels for you. At 1,770g they might not be lightest, but considering the 60mm rim depth this still isn't bad, and I was more than happy riding these in undulating road races.

The star of the show is the braking performance, especially given the slightly average performance of some of the other wheels on test. Braking performance was predictable and progressive, coming close to matching aluminium rims even in wet conditions. When compared back to back with the Zipp's on rainy rides it's hard not to be incredibly impressed with the FFWD's braking.

The 60mm FFWD rim is paired with DT Swiss DT Aerolite spokes to make a great wheelset for the sprinters, with only the slightest hint of flex during full-blooded efforts. This super-stiff, sprinter-friendly set-up also helps at low speed, where the FFWDs felt nice and sprightly, while it also doesn't have too much of a negative

effect on comfort, which is a real bonus.

Crosswind stability is also pretty good. Admittedly I did get

blown a little off course when riding past gaps in hedgerows, largely due to the V-shaped profile, but this was never to the point of being scary or dangerous, and given the £500 price difference it's only a very minor criticism.

Weight
1,770g
with skewers

9

Weight: front: 820g, rear: 950g Rim depth: 60mm
www.paligap.cc



Knight Composites 65 £1,648

Knight Composites might be a new kid on the block, but the people behind it certainly aren't running short on experience. In fact, between them the three founders have worked for more than 30 years in the bicycle and composites industries, having worked for the likes of Cervélo, Reynolds and Felt.

It's no surprise then that these are some seriously fast wheels.

The Knights have a toroidal rim profile, which means that they perform very well in crosswinds, coming close to matching the performance of the more expensive Zipp's.

Rim stiffness is also pretty good. Sprinting out of the saddle I was able to generate some slight rub, but this was easily resolved by loosening the calipers a little. Given this you might expect the Knights

to be quite harsh, but the wide internal width means you can run 25mm tyres at lower pressure, resulting in a generally smooth ride. In fact, these are probably the comfiest wheels on test when combined with a wider tyre.

When up to speed these wheels really hold their speed well, constantly urging you to ride that little bit faster. A lot of the credit must also go to the

top quality DT Swiss 240 hubs, which are incredibly smooth and round out an impressive and competitively priced

package. Braking performance is also pretty good, although there is a noticeable drop off in performance in wet conditions, but this is the only real issue I could find, and the DT-Swiss 240 hubs finish off a very good all-round package.

Weight
1,806g
with skewers

8

Weight: front: 837g, rear: 969g Rim depth: 65mm
www.velobrands.co.uk



WTF50 Full Carbon Clincher £999

WTF (Wheels That Fly, just in case you were wondering) is another new player in the wheel industry, but like Knight, this Sheffield-based brand isn't short of experience with the founders having a combined 90 years of working in the bike industry.

This 50mm carbon clincher is currently the only WTF wheel on offer, and seems very competitively priced just below a grand. This is impressive when considering the fact that they come with the same excellent DT Swiss 240 hub as the Knights and FFWDs, and are also the lightest wheels on test.

This low weight should translate into nippy acceleration, but I found this was nullified by the amount of lateral flex in the

rim. When throwing the bike from side to side and when climbing it was easy to generate brake rub, so these might not be wheels for more powerful riders, despite the 100kg rider weight limit.

Even when used with a set of 25m Continental GP 4000 tyres, the WTFs were lacking in ride comfort, which is an important consideration on UK roads.

The 25mm external rim width is fairly average, but I still felt too many vibrations making their way up to my wrists and hands towards the end of longer rides. If you're serious about aero wheels and can afford it, then you'll get much more out of one of the more expensive models on test.

Weight
1,750g
with skewers

7

Weight: front: 710g, rear: 850g **Rim depth:** 50mm
www.wtf-cycling.co.uk

Edco Livigno £2,149.99

With a price tag beyond eye-watering, I was expecting, nay demanding, exceptional performance from these Edco Livigno wheels. And thankfully, in the main, they delivered.

Despite being named after a ski resort high in the Italian Alps, these are definitely wheels that are most at home on the flat. Once you get over 20mph it's really easy to maintain your speed, so these are perfect for time trialling or for flat to mildly lumpy road races.

Much of the credit for this has to go to the superb Edco Aptera II hubs. The oversized midsection gives these wheels a very stiff foundation, while the bearings run very smoothly. This means that not only are they smooth enough to keep you trundling along at a fair old lick, they are

also stiff enough to cope with sharp bursts of power.

As an added bonus the wheels come supplied with the Edco MultiSys cassette body, which allows you to switch between Shimano, SRAM and Campagnolo without having to change the freehub. This is a serious bonus if you're lucky enough to have multiple bikes deserving of these wheels, each equipped with different groupsets. The price also includes a set of superb Continental Grand Prix 4000S II tyres.

If there's one thing that could be improved it is the wheels' stability in crosswinds. I found the front end got shoved around a little, although this was nowhere near as bad as I was expecting given the very deep (72mm) V-shaped rim.

Weight
1,750g
with skewers

8

Weight: front: 868g, rear: 1,051g **Rim depth:** 72mm
www.edco-wheels.co.uk





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FITNESS

How do I... Set up my cleats?

Cleat set-up can be complicated but there are some general rules to guide you

Vicky Ware

Setting up cleats is an area rife with conflicting advice. Steve Hogg is a bike fit guru who has trained a select group of bike fitters worldwide. Are there any cleat positions to avoid? “Yes. Too far forwards is more likely to cause injury than too far rearward,” he says. “A cleat angle that doesn’t let the hip, knee and ankle to track their ‘natural’ plane of movement is also likely to cause injury.”

Suffering injury from an ill-fitting cleat depends on many factors. Hogg explains: “It’s highly individual, with training volume, intensity and inherent abilities to compensate for a suboptimal relationship to the bike being variables.” It’s likely that poorly placed cleats will lead to injury, though. “Crashes aside, all injuries incurred from cycling are overuse injuries,” explains Hogg.

It’s possible you could be unaware your cleat position is poor. “[Some people] may never be aware of a less than ideal cleat position, others may suffer chronic pain or discomfort,” says Hogg. Although there are some basic rules, Hogg thinks that “some level of trial and error is a necessary part of the self-help process” to ensure a good cleat fit.

Essential points

- Too far forwards more likely to cause injury
- Different shoes have different positioning capabilities
- Use trial and error
- Get a professional opinion

Some cyclists ride with toes pointing directly ahead, while others ride with a slightly heel in or heel out position. Is there any right or wrong way, or is it down to individual preference? Hogg explains: “There is wide individual variation.”

One factor that affects this is how wide your hips are, which will alter the angle of your leg when clipped in to pedals. Hogg thinks people with wider hips “[do] not necessarily need a different cleat position but often need a greater foot separation distance. While cleats can be moved in or out across the shoe to varying degrees, longer or shorter than standard length pedal axles allow much greater adjustment again.”

It’s worth knowing different brands of pedal/cleat systems and shoe have different limits on where you can position your foot relative to your body and bike. Hogg explains: “Many people cannot gain an effective cleat position with standard cleats and shoes — it is the shoes that are the variable in this. Shoe

manufacturers differ widely in the fore and aft location of the cleat mounting holes on road shoes — Lake, Shimano and Specialized have the most rearward cleat mounting hole positions. Mavic has the most forward cleat mounting hole position.”

Speedplay pedals have the most float, meaning the amount you can move your heel side to side when clipped in. If you’re having trouble getting a pedal system that works for you they may be worth a try.

Take a look down at your feet as you walk. However toe-in or toe-out your feet naturally fall should be mimicked when you look down at your feet as you pedal. Sitting on a desk or table and letting your legs hang off the edge is another way to check your feet’s natural alignment.

YOU
SAY

Get a pro to align them for you!

**Thurstan
Johnston**

Draw a line around them with a marker pen so when you change them you can line up the new ones easily.

Justin Steele

If you're adjusting cleats, or fixing new ones, setting your bike up on a turbo-trainer will allow you to hop on and off to make adjustments. It's much better than doing it at the side of the road.

Cleats often have a mark that should line up with the ball of your foot (the widest part). A piece of tape stuck to the side of your shoe will allow you to mark with a pen where this part of your foot is. That mark can then be lined up with the corresponding mark on the cleat.

When replacing worn cleats, draw an outline around the old cleat with a marker pen before removing it. It is easy to then fit the new one in the exact same position.

If you've got ongoing problems, get a professional shoe/cleat fit. An expert will be able to tell whether you need adjustment of your current shoe/pedal system, or if you would be better off with a different brand.

When putting cleat bolts into used shoes make sure the threads are clean so they bite and don't come undone. A tiny dab of grease can help ensure they're done up tight enough.

As a general rule put them as far back as they will go and adjust for angle by trial and error.

Sam Alison

If you're new to clipless, get the cleats with a few degrees of play to start off.

Jonathan Boucard

Place two rubber bands on a shoe — one across the widest point and one lengthways. Where they cross is a good starting point for the cleat.

Tom Turcan

1) Put cleats on
2) Ride for 200km non-stop. If your knee-caps are still there after this, you are all set!

Fabio Ferraro

Things to do this week

Try Chia Bia Chia & Cranberry Mix

A mix of two superfoods what can go possibly wrong? Chia Bia has combined cranberries and chia seeds to create this gluten free mix that can be added to variety of food and drinks. Add a sprinkle of this to your morning porridge or your post-ride recovery smoothie and you'll not just give your meal a flavour boost but also add protein and antioxidants to your daily diet. Chia Bia has also created a blueberry mix if you prefer something different.

www.chiabia.com

£11.99 for 260g



Make a home-made energy bar

You may well have got the baking bug due to *The Great British Bake-off*'s return, so why not apply it to your cycling nutrition? It isn't as hard as you think to make your own bar and it puts the fun back into what you may think of as an uninteresting aspect of cycling. All you need are some oats, dried fruit, seeds, nuts and honey. Give it all a good mix before packing it together, shoving it in the fridge and a couple of hours later, you'll have your very own energy bars. Of course, you can add pretty much what you want into the mix.

Eat spinach

When you hear someone mention spinach you may automatically think of Popeye's bulging biceps. However, spinach can be a useful superfood to improve the performance of endurance athletes, especially cyclists. This leafy vegetable contains high levels of nitrates, which makes the body more efficient when transporting oxygen to the muscles, reducing its need during exercise. The adaptability of spinach means you can eat it raw in salads and sandwiches or cook it to accompany an evening meal.



How gut health affects performance

Vicky Ware examines how our personal bacterial culture has more of a hand in our physical and mental sporting performance than sports scientists first thought



Your body is playing host to a huge ecosystem. There are trillions upon trillions of bacteria that call your skin, mouth and intestines home. Your intestines house the most microorganisms with nearly 2kg of bacterial mass, but saving weight here won't make you faster on the bike. The microbes on your body are collectively known as the microbiome, and scientists are just unravelling the huge impact this ecosystem is having on our health. Everyone has a unique microbial fingerprint made up of different species of bacteria. Which species you have impacts on your health — and potentially your sporting performance.

The types of bacteria in your microbiome are affected by your diet, genetics and which bacteria you come into contact with on a daily basis. Your adult microbiome is even affected by things that happened to you in childhood; whether you were born by caesarean section or naturally, breast or bottle fed and even what your mum ate while she was pregnant. Some experts believe that western lifestyles are leading to 'dysbiosis' — a promotion of the wrong kinds of bacteria in our gut, due to stress, diet and increased hygiene. With this has come a plague of disease based on chronic inflammation, from cancer to asthma and allergies.

Sporting impact

There's also evidence that these microbial hitch-hikers are affecting sporting performance. A study by Hsu and colleagues at the Graduate Institute of Sports Science in Taiwan found that mice bred in a sterile environment (known as germ-free mice) have a poor exercise performance ability compared to mice bred with normal bacterial populations. Mice bred with exposure to only one kind of bacteria were better at exercise than germ-free mice, but not as good as those with diverse microbial populations.

“Experts are in the early stages of understanding the relationship between the gut and brain”

The researchers theorise this may be due to the increased antioxidant capacity of mice with a microbiome. Intense exercise produces large amounts of free radicals that need to be mopped up by antioxidant enzymes to stop them causing damage to cellular components, such as DNA and proteins — the opposite of recovery. The microbiome increases the body's ability to mop up free radicals, enhancing the ability to recover from exercise.

Professor Tim Spector, founder of the British Gut Project and author of *The Diet Myth*, thinks it likely that the microbiome is impacting on sporting performance. “One study of the Irish rugby team did find they had more healthy and diverse microbes but more human studies are needed,” he explains. Fellow microbiome researcher and author of *Follow Your Gut*, Rob Knight agrees that the bacteria are probably impacting your cycling ability. “But there is little data in humans to support this yet,” he says.

Another reason for cyclists to consider their microbiome is when using beetroot juice to improve performance. Studies have shown that people who use anti-bacterial mouthwash completely remove the benefits of consuming beetroot juice, which is beneficial because of its inorganic nitrates that are precursors to nitric oxide, the compound that actually enhances exercise ability. It turns out the bacteria in your mouth are essential to begin the process of breaking inorganic nitrates down to nitric oxide.

Another way your microbiome could be impacting on your performance on the bike is through weight gain. Researchers first noticed the microbiome may affect obesity when a slim person given a faecal transplant (that's exactly what you think it is) from an overweight person became overweight themselves. Faecal transplants are now an accepted treatment for infection with *Clostridium difficile* — which causes diarrhoea and is difficult to get rid of any other way. The fact that a faecal transplant is used rather than transferring specific species of bacteria shows that experts are not yet sure which bacteria are beneficial, or whether it's a combination of bacterial species.

Studies are also beginning to show how the microbiome impacts mental health. Experts are in the early stages of understanding how the relationship between gut and brain works, but it's an exciting ►

prospect for sports performance. For example, germ-free mice seem to show more risk-taking behaviour than mice with a normal microbiome, and be less anxious. Other studies have shown transferring the microbiome of an anxious mouse to a non-anxious one transfers the anxiety. Is it possible that the bacteria in your gut fuel your adrenaline-junkie love of racing down mountains? We're only just beginning to find out.

Diet

As a cyclist, you may eat more refined carbohydrates than would normally be the case in a healthy diet. Eating them while exercising doesn't stop this impacting on your gut bacteria, which can only eat what you eat. Different species of bacteria eat different things — it's survival of the fittest, and your diet determines which bacteria are capable of surviving. Feeding a mouse a diet typical of people in western countries (high in sugar and certain types of fat) leads to changes in the type of bacteria in its gut compared to a non-western diet (higher in fibre and 'good' fats) and to the mouse getting fat. Transfer of these bacteria to a different mouse leads to that mouse getting fat almost regardless of what it eats, suggesting the bacteria are leading to the weight gain not just the food.

Sweeteners are not the answer to cutting down sugar in your diet when it comes to a healthy microbiome. Sucralose, aspartame and saccharin reduce bacterial diversity, meaning fewer species of bacteria are in your gut. They also seem to change the kind of bacteria that can live there, leading to altered metabolism and potentially even obesity and diabetes. Sweeteners are often found in sports foods, especially recovery protein powders. One option to reduce your intake is by making your own recovery powders from pure whey or pea protein mixed with the electrolytes and even probiotics of your choice.

Professor Knight thinks other lifestyle factors are also impacting on the microbiome. He lists "lack of sleep, lack of exercise, allowing chronic inflammation to exist [e.g. via a food allergy or chronic stress], having a diet very high in meat or cheese or a diet without diverse kinds of plants" are all factors that could lead to a microbiome that isn't helping your health. Others that don't help, adds Spector, include "chronic



Making your own recovery drinks can help maintain healthy gut bacteria

lack of fibre from any source and overuse of antibiotics and junk food". A diet high in diverse kinds of plants feeds a diverse range of bacteria, which is associated with a healthy immune system.

Immune health

The immune system not only stops upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs) that could prevent you from riding your bike, but repairs damaged muscle after hard training. Athletes are more susceptible to URTIs because intense exercise leads to a dip in the immune system's ability to fight infection, allowing a window of opportunity for viruses and 'bad' bacteria. Probiotics have been shown to improve immune function, specifically through enhancing an

athlete's ability to recover and thereby reducing fatigue and preventing URTIs. Athletes taking probiotics are less likely to get an URTI in the first place — and when they do, they are both less severe and shorter in duration.

Since 2010 companies selling probiotics are not allowed to claim that they "boost the immune system" after the European Food Safety Authority ruled that these claims were unproven. This isn't because probiotics were proven to have no impact on the immune system, but rather that the impact was so complicated that using a vague term like 'boost' wasn't appropriate.

The bacteria in your gut are also responsible for keeping the intestinal wall strong and in doing so maintaining



“A diet high in diverse kinds of plants feeds a diverse range of bacteria — vital for a immune function”

a good barrier between what's in your guts and the rest of your body. They say good fences make good neighbours, and this is true of your gut bacteria. While they're promoting your health in the intestines, a breach in the barrier could allow opportunistic pathogens to infect your body. A 'leaky gut' can also allow larger particles of food into your blood

stream that can have a negative impact on health, promote inflammation, and potentially even autoimmune disease. Studies have shown that athletes are more likely to suffer from a leaky gut than non-athletes, and that probiotics can both help prevent and repair a leaky gut in these individuals.

Probiotics

A study at the University of Tasmania also found that athletes who use probiotics are able to keep exercising for longer in hot weather. After four weeks of consuming a probiotic supplement, containing lactobacillus, bifidobacterium and streptococcus, people were able to continue exercising for longer in 35°C. Despite core temperature being the same whether people had taken a probiotic or not, they were able to keep running for longer when they had topped up their intestinal flora. More research is needed to find out exactly why probiotics have this effect.

Athletes also need to eat more than non-athletes and this increase in food can have an impact on the health of your gastrointestinal tract, especially when the foods consumed are refined sugar-containing products like energy drinks and bars. Happily, probiotics have been shown to improve people's ability to digest food. One study has even shown that probiotics can help maintain healthy GI tract function in athletes.

Topping up the flora

If you're considering adding probiotics to your diet, either through foods that contain them or in tablet form, it's worth adding a little at a time. Going from zero to hero when topping up your gut bacteria could lead to an upset stomach as your microbial ecosystem is thrown into disarray. Building up slowly should prevent any need to rush to the bathroom. Lactobacilli and bifidobacterium are two species that are almost certainly 'good bacteria', so if you're going to go for a probiotic, these might be the ones to try.

Fermented foods naturally contain bacteria that were used in their creation and can be used to maintain your microbiome. These include kefir, sauerkraut, kombucha tea, miso soup and probiotic-containing yoghurts. One definite no-no when it comes to your microbiome is taking antibiotics when not absolutely necessary. They impact

Which bacteria are best though?

Professor Knight explains: "It probably depends on who you are: different people have very different bacteria. Through projects like American Gut (and now British Gut) we're just starting to find out why these differences exist and their effects on health." Although he adds: "Bacteria that produce butyrate and a diverse population of bacteria are correlated with health."

Eating prebiotic foods — those which promote growth of good bacteria — can help the butyrate-producing bacteria in your gut. Soluble fibre is a key prebiotic. When broken down by bacteria, short-chain fatty acids (SCFA) are produced. Butyrate is an SCFA thought to be good for health by providing energy for the cells making up the intestinal wall and thereby decreasing leaky gut.

Polyphenol-containing foods are also important prebiotics. Professor Spector explains: "If you want to stay healthy eat a diverse range of real foods with high fibre and plenty of polyphenols, like olive oil and dark chocolate."

on your 'good' bacteria along with the one causing the problem, and seem to have a long-term effect on the diversity of bacteria in your microbiome. Research has shown that antibiotics have a long-term impact on levels of bifidobacterium in the gut. Other studies have shown that the ratio of bifidobacterium to firmicutes in the gut is predictive of whether someone is lean or overweight, more firmicutes and you're more likely to gain weight, suggesting antibiotics could lead to weight gain. Children given antibiotics are also more likely to develop asthma and allergies.

While experts aren't yet sure which bacteria are doing what when it comes to their impact on human health, or whether there even is a one-size-fits-all microbial milieu, it's certainly exciting to consider the paradigm shift in thinking that has come from completed studies on the microbiome. If transferring bacteria from one person's gut to another can transfer traits such as anxiety, could it also transfer sporting ability? If so Chris Froome and Bradley Wiggins may be sitting, quite literally, on a gold mine. ■

Pete Williams: My week in training

Cycling Weekly caught up with One's Pete Williams after his very successful week at the Tour of Britain

Date: August 31-September 6 | **Location:** Skipton, UK

Paul Knott

Pete Williams has a notable history with the Tour of Britain, riding seven of the last eight editions, starting back with his first pro team Pinarello Racing in 2008. He later moved on to ride under a number of different sponsors for the team that eventually came to be known as Velosure-Giordana between 2009 and 2012, before a move to Team IG-Sigma Sport in 2013. This year he joined One where he has become a crucial member of the team, and had even more reason to celebrate at the Tour of Britain this year after securing a double triumph in both the mountains and sprint classifications.

Monday

I'd just finished a big block of training the previous two weeks in the Alps as well as a week's racing and training with the team in France and Holland. So this week was about recovering from that and letting the training soak in. I took the whole day off on Monday as I'd just completed Ronde Van Midden in Holland at the weekend, which consisted of a team time trial on the Saturday and a 200km road race on the Sunday.

WE SAY Recovery is just as, if not more, important than training itself, especially before a big race like the Tour of Britain. The significance of overtraining can be severely detrimental to a rider's performance when it matters most. Overtraining can also result in illness or injury, as the body's natural defences are unable to fight off infection.

Tuesday

I rode out to meet the lads and did a steady group ride which was just over a couple of

hours, before stopping off at the cafe on the way home.

WE SAY

Resting is important, but making sure that your legs don't stiffen up means that gentle recovery rides are essential to a balanced training week. The temptation to push yourself must be resisted; otherwise you put yourself at risk of causing more harm than good.

Wednesday

I went to see the physio in the morning to get straightened out ready for the following week. Then I met up with my One Pro Cycling team-mate Josh Hunt to ride around the key parts of stage two which was local to me. It was a six-hour ride with the first three hours ridden at a decent

tempo. We then included nine fartlek hill efforts in the second part of the ride.

Team coach Steve Benton sets my training programme; he then uses power data to ensure that I am riding at the correct intensities that he has specified for each training ride. The weather wasn't ideal but I got through it knowing it was probably going to be my last long, hard training ride of the season. I always try and do a few hard climbs before a stage race, so when we have to race up climbs they don't seem so steep!

WE SAY

Viewing stages before the race is a wise decision as you are able to plan a strategy after seeing the course firsthand. As stage two was local to Williams, a recce ride may not be as beneficial as riding on roads that are completely new, but it can still prove useful to see how to approach the roads at race speed. Fartlek training (translated as 'speed play' in Swedish) combines both continuous and interval training into a single session. This is great training ahead of a race as it replicates the repeated efforts that might be needed to get into a breakaway or attack during a competitive situation.

Thursday

I went for an hour-and-a-half steady ride with Tom Moses [JLT-Condor rider] just to keep the legs moving, which included an obligatory cafe stop in Skipton.

WE SAY

Training with riders from different teams offers the chance to explore different routes, whilst keeping each session fresh.

Friday

Today was another day off the bike, as I had to pack my bags and travel down to meet up with the rest of the One Pro Cycling team.



Pete Williams

■ Age: 28
■ Discipline: road
■ Best results: first mountains classification 2015 Tour of Britain; first sprint classification Tour of Britain (2012, 2015); first 2015 Eddie Soens Memorial race



Williams in action at the Otley town centre races in July

Saturday

I just went for a steady hour's ride with the team near the hotel in Chester. It was at a decent pace with a few efforts added in to make sure we were ready for the race starting on Sunday. We had the team presentation on Saturday evening then we were ready to race.

WE SAY

Group rides as a team are great to discuss tactics or just to bond before a race. The importance of this is highlighted further with the Tour of Britain, as race radios were banned meaning team communication was vital.

Sunday

Tour of Britain, stage one:

Beaumaris > Wrexham, 57th place

One of the team's aims before the race was to be in the breaks. These usually form early in the stage, making for a hard, fast first hour. We made sure we were ready for this by warming up on turbo-trainers. My warm-up is usually between 15-20 minutes depending on the length of the neutralised section. I start off steady then build up to doing around five minutes at a decent tempo so my legs feel open and ready to go hard from the drop of the flag.

I managed to get myself in the four-man

break for the day and felt pretty good. We committed in the last part to try and get to the finish, but we got caught with one and a half kilometres to go. So close yet so far! I was happy with my day out and it set the tone for the rest of the week.

WE SAY

The sight of teams warming up on turbos before a stage is becoming more common. Warming up was typically seen before time trials and track races when a rider had to be ready to go from the gun. A warm-up prepares the body for the onset of exercise by increasing heart rate and blood flow and helps a rider prepare mentally.

Keeping your cool

How effective are clothes designed with technology that cool the skin?

Andrew Hamilton

Most cyclists are familiar with technical clothing designed to keep you warm and dry. In the last couple of years, however, a new breed of garments using 'cooling fabrics' has appeared on the market. These use various technologies to actively cool the skin, such as aluminium-based dots embedded into the fabric to conduct heat away from the skin, and hydrophilic (water-attracting) rings inside a moisture wicking fabric to create a cooling effect when triggered by sweat. But how effective are these cooling fabrics at actually enhancing performance?

The good news

In a newly published study by Canadian scientists, 20 trained athletes were divided into two groups. Both groups completed an indoor ride to exhaustion at 85 per cent of their maximum power (hard!), on an exercise bike while wearing an outfit consisting of a fitted long-sleeved shirt and

full trousers. However, one group wore a cooling fabric claimed to have superior cooling properties and evaporative characteristics (a nylon/spandex mix manufactured by Lamour Hosiery), while the other group wore garments made of a synthetic control fabric with no claimed cooling properties.

The results showed that the 'cooling fabric' offered no significant advantages to the athletes who wore garments made from it. Their riding times to exhaustion were no longer, and their skin temperatures, heart and breathing rates and perceived exertion levels were no different either (you would expect all these measures to be lower if there had been an actual cooling effect).

Because different cooling garments employ different technologies, they can't all be dismissed out of hand, but this study does suggest that buyers should not automatically assume that all cooling garments will live up to manufacturers' promises.



Tests may have dealt a blow to cooling fabrics

Photo: Chris Catchpole

Great for...

post-ride protein punch

Crisped salmon with watercress and soba noodles

This is the perfect meal to have when you get back from a long ride and want to replenish depleted nutrition stores. Salmon is a great source of protein and provides crucial omega-3 fatty acids that benefit joints, the heart and brain function.

INGREDIENTS:

Serves 4

- 4 x 175g boneless, skinless salmon fillets
- 4 tbsp teriyaki marinade
- Juice of two oranges
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp groundnut oil
- Ground black pepper
- 250g soba noodles (40 per cent buckwheat)
- 85g bag watercress



METHOD:

- 1) Marinate the salmon fillets in the teriyaki marinade for 10 minutes, turning them over halfway through.
- 2) Meanwhile, make up a dressing by mixing the orange juice with the soy sauce and groundnut oil before seasoning with plenty of black pepper.
- 3) Cook the soba noodles according to the pack instructions and drain. Mix the noodles with the dressing.
- 4) Heat a frying pan over a moderate heat and cook the salmon for five minutes, turning over halfway through.
- 5) Stir the watercress into the soba noodles, divide between four plates and top with salmon.

**NUTRITION
PER SERVING:****634**

kcalories

52g

carbohydrates

45g

protein

28g

fat

**Time
taken:
15 mins**

**TAKE HOME TRAINING SESSION**

Autumnal training starts now

The clocks will soon be going back, so it's time to ease off with the intense training and reflect on the season you've just completed. But this doesn't mean your training rides have to fade away completely...

Start off this session with a 20-minute warm up at a gentle cadence of 60rpm riding no harder than a zone two effort.

The main body of this training session consists of four sets of five-minute intervals with three 10-minute recovery intervals interspersed. These five-minute intervals should require a zone three effort, which build towards a zone four intensity. It is important to ride these intervals at a pedalling cadence of 95rpm, so increasing the interval from zone three to four requires moving through the gears. Drop down a gear if you are unable to maintain the

required cadence, as this is the main focus of the session. You'll fatigue faster if you chug along in a big gear at a lower cadence.

Finish with a 20-minute cool down at 60rpm, completed at no more than a zone two effort.

**Time
taken:
90 mins**

Time (minutes)	Cadence (RPM)	Zone
0-20	60	1-2
20-25	95	3-4
25-35	80	2-3
35-40	95	3-4
40-50	80	2-3
50-55	95	3-4
55-65	80	2-3
65-70	95	3-4
70-90	60	1-2

Effort	You can	It feels like you're...	Use it for...	% Max heart rate	% FT power
Easy Zone 1	Chat freely	Warming up	Warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery	60-65%	56-75%
Steady Zone 2	Speak one sentence at a time	Riding along in the bunch on the flat	Long rides	65-75%	76-90%
Brisk Zone 3	Speak a few words at a time	Breathing deeply and working hard	Long efforts of 10 to 20min	75-82%	91-105%
Hard Zone 4	Say only one word at a time	Really attacking (perhaps on a climb)	Efforts lasting 2-8min	82-89%	106-120%
Very hard Zone 5	Grunt and gasp	Sprinting	Efforts lasting less than 2min	89%-MHR	121%+

Kentish Killer

sportive

CW
Difficulty
rating:
7/10

Next
year's
event:
Feb 28

69.5
miles

1,970
metres
ascent

Does this event in the Garden of England live up to its fearsome name?

The clue really is in the name with this event. I found myself ruining the decision to ignore the obvious as I crawled home after the preview ride. Riding the short distance to and from the route wasn't my best idea.

The problem was seeing the ride at *only* 69.5 miles and knowing many of the roads. Familiarity breeds contempt and all that.

Many of these quiet roads used for this early season event will be familiar to riders who ▶

Where is it?

The route runs up and down Kent's western border with Surrey. Starting and finishing on top of the North Downs it heads through the Weald of Kent to its most southerly point at the top of the Ashdown Forest. The start and finish is at the very well equipped Brands Hatch circuit just eight miles south of Dartford.

Why ride it?

The short but very testing route is perfect for giving your winter training a boost. Indoor feed stations, mechanical support and roaming and static marshals are nice to have around when doing a big ride at this time of year; at least you know help is on hand should bad weather hit and put you in trouble.

History

This will be the seventh edition, and every year it raises thousands for the Kent air ambulance. Along with the Hell of the Ashdown sportive, it somewhat mirrors the early season reliability rides that South London clubs have traditionally promoted in this part of Kent. Twenty five riders have now ridden all seven runnings of the Killer.



How to enter

Head over to www.gsavanti.co.uk/ kentish-killer from 6pm on November 1 and sign up. Be quick, the 1,000 places usually sell out in 48 hours. Entry is £25.

HQ details

Brands Hatch is on the A20, just three miles from junction three of the M25 and 21 miles south east of central London. Nearest train stations are Eynsford and Farningham Road in South Darenth.

Where to stay

Brandshatch Place and Spa is nearby, but a little pricey. The Brands Hatch Thistle hotel is a little cheaper and just as close.

Where to eat

There's hot food for every finisher at the end, but if you want to head out after the ride the Anchor and Hope in Ash near Sevenoaks is always popular.

Local bike shop

Bike Warehouse in Sevenoaks is one of the closest. It's closed on Sundays, but thankfully there's full mechanical support on the ride.



have tackled any of the traditional Old Ports, Catford or Sydenham reliability rides in the past. The local club riders that used these events for early season 'hit outs' have adopted the Killer, and GS Avanti get a consistently good entry from the local South London clubs.

Heading south from Brands Hatch motor racing circuit sees you quickly into Kent's lanes. These country roads are incredibly quiet, even when we previewed the route on a Wednesday in early September. An early Sunday morning will be quieter still.

They're picturesque, too. As you drop off the North Downs, the views south over the Weald of Kent are stunning, although admittedly it may not be as green and pleasant in February.

The first clue as to the severity of this route is Carter's Hill. The steepest section goes on for just under a kilometre (there's a little bit of respite in the middle), include the long approach and it's twice as long. This is the first part of the 'M' shaped section in the route that includes one other climb and leaves you

feeling like you haven't managed to get very far.

Dropping down towards Chiddingstone Causeway we were still a good distance from the southernmost point of the route, and we'd been riding for a lot longer than we'd planned. The miles would tick by faster in a group on event day, but it was becoming clear that I'd underestimated the ride. From here the road heads due south and out to the farthest point at the top of the Ashdown Forest. At last you feel like you're getting somewhere, although there's no let-up in the climbing through Penshurst and Fordcombe — at least the climbs in this area are more gradual than the climbs on the North Downs.

The turn for home can't come soon enough, but be warned, if you meet a headwind here you're in for a seriously tough day. The northward stretch does at least start with a long descent through Chuck Hatch, but it's not long before you're climbing again. It's fair to say there are few flat roads through Hartfield and Cowden on the way back to Bough Beech reservoir, and the roads are rough too.

The next big test is Ide Hill, just after the reservoir, which marks the beginning of the toughest part of the route where the hills hit your tired legs in quick succession. Soon after crossing the M25 you hit the slow grind up Sundridge Hill. This may be the worst of the final three climbs, but as the fatigue in your legs increases they feel progressively harder. Rowdown Lane and Tinker Pot Lane are the final two climbs after Otford, neither of which you're able to carry any speed into. This final 13-mile stretch is surely where the well-deserved 'Killer' tagline comes from. ■

ORGANISER'S TARGET TIMES

Category (age/sex)	Award Times Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Under 40/men	3:55 @ 17.7mph	4:25 @ 15.7mph	5:00 @ 13.9mph	5:40 @ 12.2mph
40-59/men	4:15 @ 16.3mph	4:40 @ 14.9mph	5:10 @ 13.4mph	5:55 @ 11.7mph
Over 60/men	4:35 @ 15.2mph	5:10 @ 13.4mph	5:55 @ 11.7mph	6:50 @ 10.2mph
Under 40/women	4:10 @ 16.7mph	4:40 @ 14.9mph	5:15 @ 13.2mph	5:55 @ 11.7mph
40-59/women	4:30 @ 15.4mph	4:55 @ 14.1mph	5:25 @ 12.8mph	6:10 @ 11.2mph
Over 60/women	4:40 @ 14.9mph	5:25 @ 12.8mph	6:10 @ 11.2mph	7:05 @ 9.8mph

The challenges

1 Carter's Hill

A tough climb that you can see coming a mile off. The fact that once you're on the climb it keeps ramping up each time you go round a bend doesn't help. You do at least get a breather in the middle.

2 Black Hill

This long drag to the top of the Ashdown Forest is fast enough to get a benefit from sitting in a group. Find riders of a similar speed and share the work.

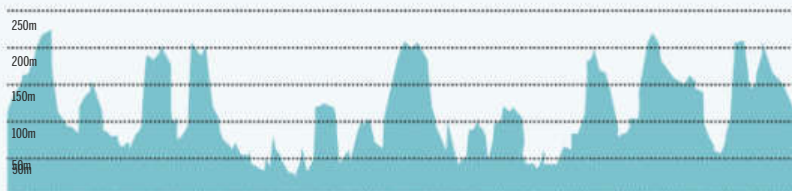
3 Ide Hill

A steep hill made tougher by the terrible surface. You know you're nearing the top when the tree cover thins out on your right. Enjoy the view, if you can.

NAIL IT

4 Sundridge Hill

This narrow country lane delivers the killer blow with around 12 miles still to go. The road drags all the way up from Sundridge where the route crosses the A25 before the steep section under the trees. Some sections of the road on the long drag are so potholed they barely exist, so be careful riding through any standing water. The climb proper hits 18 per cent at its steepest and then drags on over the top. Eat and drink before you get to Sundridge to ensure you've got some fuel left in you for this challenge. And don't forget you have two more short, steep climbs to come after this one. You don't want to empty the tank completely on this climb.



Event website: www.gsavanti.co.uk/kentish-killer | Download the GPX file: www.gsavanti.co.uk/kentish-killer/routes

Taw Velo Cycling Club

Hannah Bussey meets a South-West club with a zeal for rider training

Hannah, there's some blue sky out there, reads a text from the Taw Velo ride captain for the day, Nick Rowell. It's 9am and it's raining in biblical proportions. I've checked with Rowell that he's still happy to go ahead with our ride; he has assured me there is a group gagging to ride.

As I arrive at the Bike Shed in Barnstaple, Devon, I see that I'm the only doubter of today's ride. There's already a dozen or so riders drinking coffee, ready for the off. The cafe-cum-bike shop is abuzz with chatting riders. The club's kids' section is off for a mountain bike ride or having a well-earned rest day after making the most of the

sunshine the day before. I'm joining the adults on their regular Sunday club run.

We roll out amid a fresh deluge of rain, instantly soaking us to the core.

"You just get used to it," says Rachel Pryce. "If you waited for a sunny day, you'd never get out." And it's clear that these guys are seasoned rainy-day riders with mudguards all round.

After a quick pedal through the town, we're soon riding in a northerly direction uphill, the incline doing little to slow the chat.

"Sometimes I laugh so much with this lot, I can't ride," says Mandy Sanders, "especially at our training sessions." She goes on to tell

me about specific skills training sessions for bike-handling, bunch riding and cyclo-cross for adult riders. It's clear that the whole club has benefited from this training, as we're now heading down a typical steep and twisty West Country descent in the wet and gusty wind, and I'm the slowest by far, taking it very cautiously.

No escaping hills

The ride continues in this up-and-down manner, and after being paced beautifully by Anna Tucker on a long drag, she tells me that she's rubbish at hills. I beg to differ. Riding here can't help but make you a good climber. We've ridden 25 or so miles so far, and not one of them was flat. After sensibly splitting into smaller groups to tackle the busy coastal road, the rain has now eased to 'mizzle' — a combination of mist and drizzle that wipes out any chance of glimpsing the impressive sea views.

With the rain nearly abated by the time we get to the coastal town of Ilfracombe,

Club facts

Based: Barnstaple, North Devon

Members: 145 (60 youth)

Formed: 2007

Meets: The Bike Shed, Barnstaple, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, Saturday and Sunday mornings

there's a general consensus in favour of a warming coffee and cake break. After a swift pit-stop, we're back riding uphill once more, but this time with the promise that it's the final climb before joining the Tarka Trail, a traffic-free route along the disused railway line. As we near the top, the sun just about breaks through, much to everyone's joy.

We descend for the last time to the picturesque coastal road around Croyde, where we once more dive off the beaten track. This time we're on a quiet country lane in the middle of a nature reserve, before rejoining the Tarka Trail alongside the River Taw, heading back into Barnstaple.

I mention to Jamie Adams that I feel like we're in

History

Named after the River Taw, the club was established in 2007 with the aim of promoting cycling in North Devon. It gives people of all ages and abilities, male and female, an opportunity to meet like-minded cyclists. Nowadays, its membership ranges in age from six to 80, and they take part in every cycling discipline going — including bike polo!

With a strong committee, the club has successfully gained funding from Sport England, Bike It, the Michael Davey Trust Fund and the Bridge Trust Fund. This has enabled the club to not only support several volunteer coaches and regular training sessions, but also to purchase 15 cyclo-cross bikes and a trailer so

non-cycling youngsters, including Scout groups, can be introduced to the beauty of bike riding.

The club's real strength is in its volunteers, boasting seven British Cycling coaches, led by British Cycling Level 2 head coach Darren Armstrong. The members wax lyrical about Armstrong's commitment and dedication to getting kids on bikes.

Although the club has seen some great successes in youth racing, the emphasis is on participation and cycling for enjoyment and being healthy.

There aren't many days in the week when there's not a planned ride or training session. Adult rides are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday and Sunday mornings, while the

youth section of the club has weekly coached traffic-free sessions courtesy of Barnstaple's Petroc College. For the more advanced youth riders, there's an adult-led Monday night ride on the road too.

Achievements

■ George Armstrong (15): first place in the South West Cyclo-Cross Winter Series 2014-2015 and competes nationally in mtb.

■ Jed Harris: Strava Everest challenge on Exmoor in 2014 — climbed Drybridge Combe 63 times to cover 189 miles in 18 hours and 8,900m of climbing.

■ Fin Mead (10) and Lucy Ward (10), both South-West under-10s

circuit race champions 2015.

■ In addition to these, Taw Velo has also achieved British Cycling's highest standard for clubs and been awarded Sport England's Clubmark, a cross-sport quality accreditation for clubs with junior sections.





Taw Velo club run

Ride highlights

1 Ilfracombe

The impressive Damian Hurst 'Verity' statue is reason enough to visit the harbour, but the Landmark Theatre cafe, where we had coffee among actors while admiring the sea, did it for me.

2 Croyde to Saunton

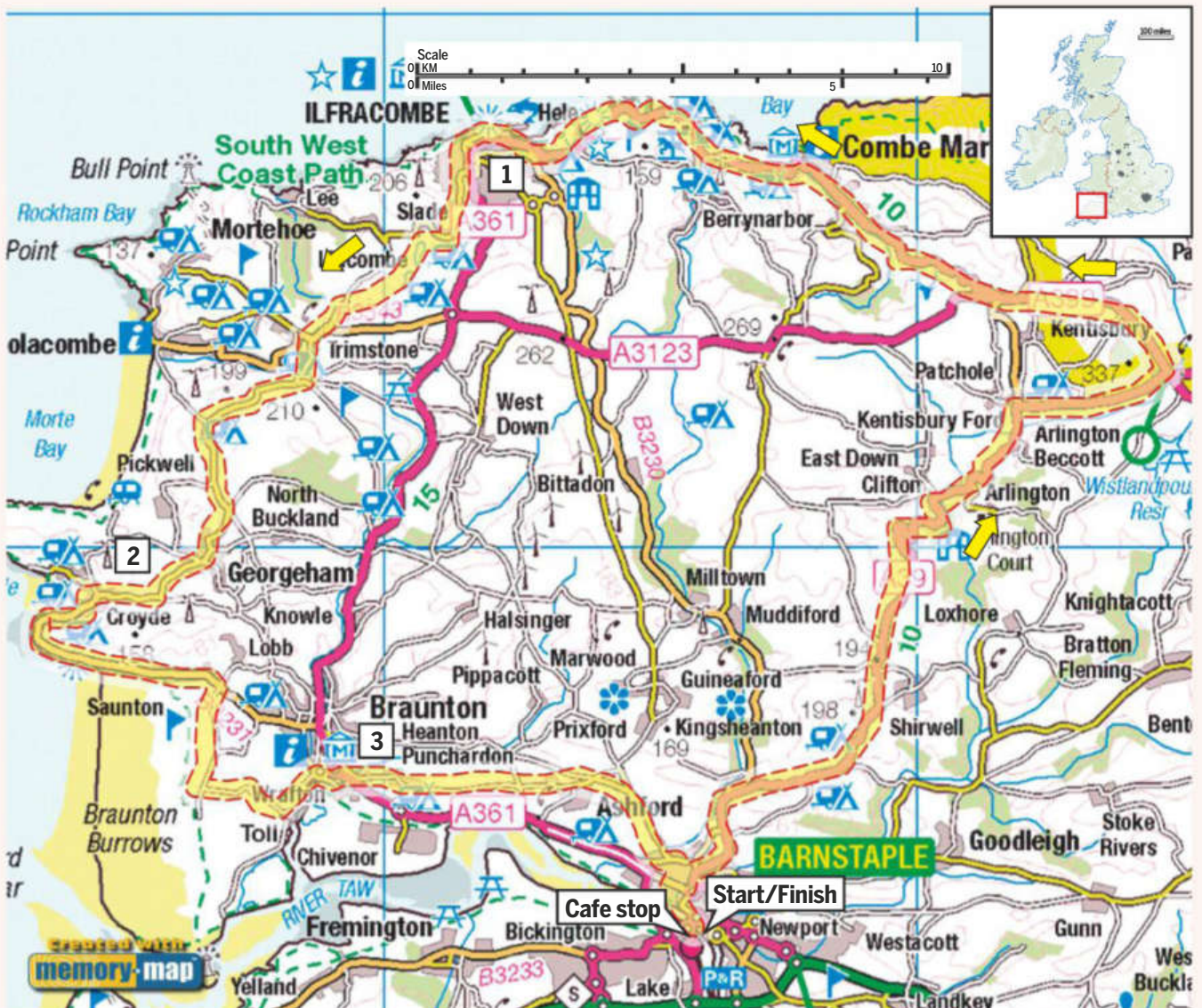
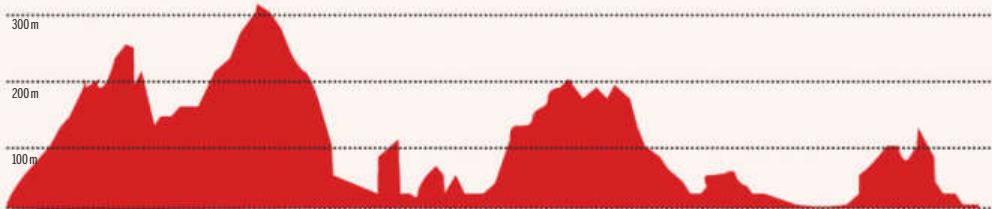
On a good day, the coastal road is stunning and has one of the best views in the country looking out across to Lundy Island.

3 Tarka Trail

Said to be one of the UK's longest dedicated cycle routes, the traffic-free trail is wide enough for two-abreast in both directions. Having recently been resurfaced, it's an awesome road alternative.

Favourite cafe

The Bike Shed functions as Taw Velo's headquarters, and it's clear to see why. Co-located with a well-stocked bike shop, the cafe is the perfect cyclist hangout with bike racks inside, loads of seating and a large TV showing live racing. Opening at 8am, even on a Sunday, means most rides start and end with coffee and cake. I adopted a 'when in Rome' approach and can verify that the pre-ride coffee and croissant were spot-on, as was the delicious post-ride 'Big Bird' bagel and carrot cake, washed down with coffee.





Savvy riders always prepare for the rain

Meet the club



Louis and Ellen Earnsworth:
"We began with cyclo-cross, but now ride all kinds of bikes with the club and we're off mountain biking this morning."



Andy Hawkes (chairperson):
"We've a great committee and team of volunteers, I don't have to crack a whip."



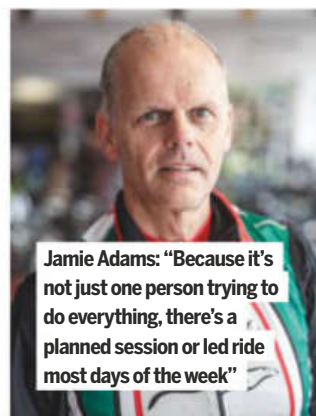
Laughter is proof of the club's fun side



Ready to roll at the cafe



Becky Cornwell: "I'm from a rowing background, but after one ride with the club I was hooked. It's so supportive and encouraging."



Jamie Adams: "Because it's not just one person trying to do everything, there's a planned session or led ride most days of the week"

Belgium riding along the canals, and right on cue the heavens open again.

"Especially with this Belgian sunshine," he jokes. Thankfully it's not long until we're back at the Bike Shed.

We're all soaked, but the owners don't hesitate to welcome us in, even finding another bike rack to make sure all bikes are safely inside.

With a big screen showing the women's La Course race

live from Paris, there's a reluctance to leave — but the discomfort of rain-soaked kit finally gets the better of even this hardcore group, and they gradually make tracks, after just one more coffee. ■

MASSIF

TOTAL DISTANCE 62 MILES

TOTAL ASCENT 2,465 M

MINI MASSIF

TOTAL DISTANCE 44 MILES

TOTAL ASCENT 1,773 M



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Riber

Matlock, Derbyshire

Simon Warren

The days when I was under 10 stone and could romp up Riber's vicious gradient on a 42x23 seem like a long time ago now. The road up to Riber Castle is all about the five bends at the top but the climbing starts way down in the centre of Matlock, and how you approach these early slopes will dictate how you cope further on. Take it easy and your time will suffer; go too hard and there's every chance you'll be off and walking before the top.

CW
Difficulty
rating:
9/10

Heading away from the A632 on Church Street you pass through Starkholmes and the left-hand turn for Riber Road looms into sight. There are few steeper streets in the UK and it requires a huge effort to get round the first bend and onwards, its 20 per cent gradient biting hard. Through the bends between the houses, it's a pure fight against gravity on the narrow, convoluted, yet perfectly wonderful road, right, then sharp left and right almost on top of each other before the final left turn to eye up the summit. Ouch.

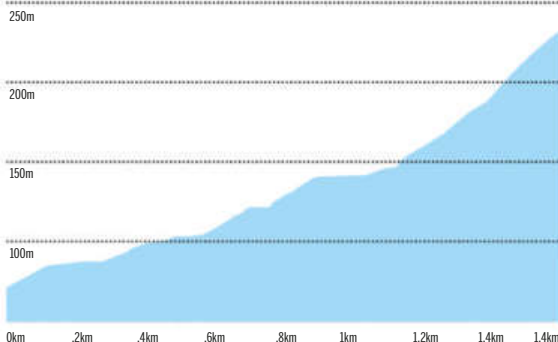
The stats

WHERE Head east from Matlock on the A615 and then turn south on Church Street just after the junction with the A632.



KoM Top Tip Make sure you're in your lowest gear when you turn left onto Riber Road.

1.8km	259m	158m	9%	25%
Length	Summit height	Height gain	Average gradient	Max gradient

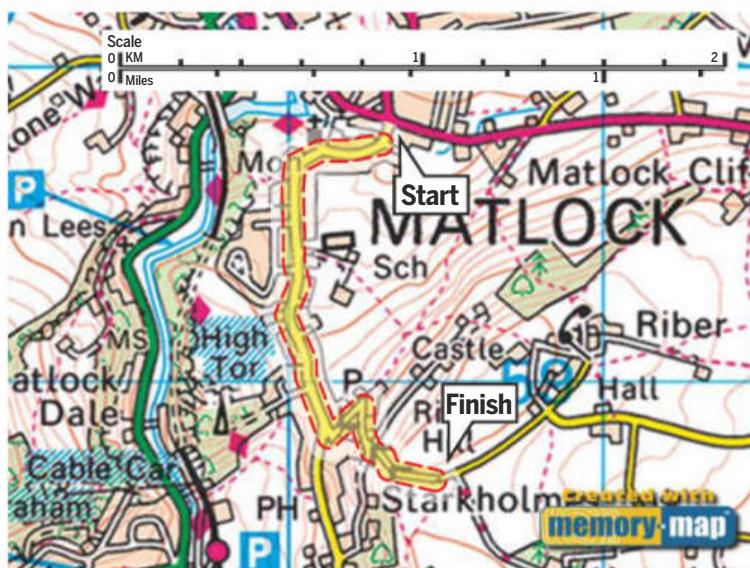


Strava file: www.strava.com/segments/6677656



Riber hosted the 1986 National Hill-Climb Champs

Photo: Ian Gilbert



Ordnance Survey mapping © Crown copyright. AM46/13. Created with Memory-Map

Sennema doubles up in Devon

Defending national hill-climb champions Dan Evans (Team Elite) and Maryka Sennema (Paceline RT) threw down the gauntlet to their rivals for the 2015 crown as they won the Exeter Wheelers climb of Stoke Hill in Devon on Saturday.

Both entered the following day's Minehead CC climb of Portlock toll road too with an extra £100 prize for the best riders over both events, but only Sennema took a second win with Evans being pipped to the top by former national champion Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy CT).

Fast times

Evans clocked 4:13.0 for the 1.2-mile climb on Saturday to take the win by 16 seconds from George Pym (Raleigh-GAC), while Sennema reached the top in 5:14.7, 28 seconds faster than the next best woman.

Pettinger only rode Sunday's Minehead CC event, but he made it count as he clocked 14:45.54 for the four-mile climb of the Porlock toll road to beat Evans by just under three seconds.

With equal prize money for both sexes, Sennema took home £300 as she clocked 17:50.65 to finish 1:33 ahead of her nearest rival.

Record breakers

Elsewhere, records tumbled in the GS Metro two-stage hill-climb event in Northumberland on Sunday.

Ben Davis (Wheelbase) and Ingrid Shepherd (Sunderland Clarion) took overall victories. Davis broke the course record

for the 1.6-mile Hedley on the Hill climb, while Shepherd broke the women's record for both Hedley and Eastgate Bank.

In cyclo-cross, Matt Holmes (Arctic Tacx) won both rounds of the Eastern League over the weekend, at Redbridge on Saturday and Colchester on Sunday. But he needed a sprint finish to beat junior Dougal Toms (Iceni Velo) on Sunday.

Scott Chalmers (Felt Racing) recorded another win in the Western League round two at Gloucester, while in-form Ben Sumner (Beeline Gener8) was again winner of the Wessex League at Newbury.

Paul Oldham (Hope Factory Racing) bagged a third consecutive Yorkshire Points Series win at Thornes Park in Wakefield, while Tony Fawcett (Vieri Velo) won round three of the North East Series at Ponteland.

Dan Fleeman (SportGrub Kuota) won the West Midlands League race at Coventry, while Andrew Parker (Mid-Devon CC) was victorious at the South West League event at Taunton.

Rider of the week

Ingrid Shepherd
(Sunderland Clarion)

GS Metro hill-climb

The 46-year-old broke the women's course record for both the Hedley on the Hill and Eastgate Bank climbs in Northumberland on Sunday.

Hill climbs

Sunday, September 20

Minehead CC (Porlock toll road, four miles):

Men:

1. Tejvan Pettinger (Sri Chinmoy CT)	14:45.54
2. D. Evans (Team Elite)	14:48.24
3. R. Russell (RST Sport-Aero Coach)	15:29.22
4. J. Channon (Tavistock Wh)	16:24.20
5. J. Norledge (Pro Cycling Magazine)	16:30.90
6. C. McFadzean (CS Dynamo)	16:35.20
7. R. Spink (Type One Diabetes)	16:41.65
8. T. Walker (VC Walcot)	16:41.93
9. D. Robson (Somerset RC)	16:56.54
10. J. Coleman (VC Walcot)	16:59.43
Women:	
1. Maryka Sennema (Paceline RT)	17:50.65
2. N. Grinczer (Fusion RT)	19:23.12
3. H. Viles (Somerset RC)	19:38.77
Juniors: Jordan Channon.	
Juveniles: Harrison Wood (Mid Devon CC)	
	19:01.91

GS Metro two-stage (Hedley on the Hill and Eastgate Bank, Northumberland):

Overall:

1. Ben Davis (Wheelbase Altura MGD)	7:20.5
2. M. Jones (GS Metro)	7:46.0
3. C. Donaldson (GS Metro)	7:48.9
4. J. Bayley (Gosforth RC)	7:55.2
5. M. Openshaw (Cestria CC)	8:01.2
6. C. Atkinson (EMC)	8:05.5
7. L. Lambeth (Beacon Wh)	8:14.9
8. M. Harrison (Houghton CC)	8:17.1
9. J. Bowman (Muckle Cycling Club)	8:28.0
10. T. Hordon (Barnesbury CC)	8:29.7

Stage one:

1. Ben Davis (Wheelbase Altura MGD)	4:13.7
2. M. Jones (GS Metro)	4:33.6
3. C. Donaldson (GS Metro)	4:37.0
4. J. Bayley (Gosforth RC)	4:40.1
5. M. Openshaw (Cestria CC)	4:40.8
6. C. Atkinson (EMC)	4:43.0

Stage two:

1. Ben Davis (Wheelbase Altura MGD)	3:06.8
2. C. Donaldson (GS Metro)	3:11.9
3. M. Jones (GS Metro)	3:12.4
4. J. Bayley (Gosforth RC)	3:15.1
5. N. Spencer (Blumilk.com)	3:18.7
6. M. Openshaw (Cestria CC)	3:20.4

Combined veteran 40: Michael Openshaw

Combined woman: Ingrid Shepherd (Sunderland Clarion CC)	9:39.2
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Combined veteran 50: Neil Baxter

(Blumilk.com)	9:13.3
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Combined junior: Thomas Hordon

(Barnesbury CC)	8:29.7
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Combined juvenile: Daniel Dixon

(Gosforth RC)	9:47.9
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Team: GS Metro (Michael Jones,

Carl Donaldson, Ben Lane)	24:11
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Saturday, September 19

Exeter Wheelers (Stoke Hill, Devon, 1.2 miles):

Seniors:

1. Dan Evans (Team Elite-Paul Bethall Electrical)	4:13.0
2. G. Pym (Team Raleigh GAC)	4:29.6
3. H. Lutton (RU Training today CC)	4:30.7
4. D. Creber (Malvern Cycle Sport)	4:37.6
5. J. Norledge (Pro Cycling RT)	4:40.4
6. J. Channon (Tavistock Wh)	4:45.3

Juniors: Harry Lutton.

Women:

1. Maryka Sennema (Paceline RT)	5:14.7
2. H. Viles (Somerset RC)	5:42.6
3. E. Cockroft (Bikeshed UEx)	5:44.5

Cyclo cross

Sunday, September 20

BWA West Midlands League round three (Heart of England Centre, Coventry):

Seniors: 1. Dan Fleeman (SportGrub KUOTA)

50.36; 2. C. Biddle (Solihull CC) +0.20; 3. M. Barrett (Renvale RT) +0.33; 4. P. Hinch (Brotherton Cycles) +0.49; 5. M. Dennis (Renvale RT) +0.54; 6. G. Moore (Bicicelo) +1.34

Juniors: Cameron Biddle

Veterans 40: Darren Atkins (Ride Coventry)

Veterans 50: Ian Wright (unattached)

Women: Nikki Harris (Teiener Fidea)

Youth boy: Lewis Askey (Lichfield City CC)

Youth girl: Josie Nelson (M&D Cycles)

Under-12s: Ben Askey (Lichfield City CC)

Under-10s: Spencer Corder (Stratford CC)

Under-8s: George Cooper (Bolsover and Dist CC)

Under-6s: Tamsin Moss (Stratford CC)

Wessex League round two (Newbury, Berkshire):

Seniors: 1. Ben Sumner (Beeline Gener8)

49.28; 2. A. Lansley (Pedal On) +0.14; 3. S. Allen (Pedal On) +2.03; 4. S. Chappell (Behind the Bikes) +2.26; 5. P. Lloyd (Rides on Air) +2.32; 6. J. Pybus (Compres Sport) +2.37

Veterans 40: Jamie Norfolk (Pedal On)

Veterans 50: Stephen Dines (Wight Mountain)

Women: Sarah Barber (North Hampshire RC)

Veterans race: Crispin Doyle (Hargroves Cycles)

Juniors: Tom Sewell (Cotswold Veldrijden)

Youth boy: Will Cooper (i-team CC)

Youth girl: Abbie Manley (Eden Veranda Racing)

Under-12s: Jed Smithson (Hillingdon

Slipstreamers)

Under-10s: Mellish Mack (Zappi's CC)

Yorkshire Points Series round three (Thornes Park, Wakefield):

Senior: 1. Paul Oldham (Hope Factory Racing)

59.22; 2. J. Clarkson (Hope Factory Racing) +0.11; 3. N. Barnes (Hargroves Cycles) +1.57; 4. B. Harding (Oldfield Paul Milnes); 5. T. Ramsey (Giant UK); 6. T. Seaman (Nutcracker Racing)

Veteran: Jamie Sharp (Feather Cycles)

Veteran 45: Richard Binks (PH MAS Cycles)

Woman: Adela Carter (Hope Factory Racing)

Youth boy: Matt Taylor (VC PH MAS)

Youth girl: Lucy Whatley (Pedal Sport RT)

Under-14 boy: Joe Pidcock (Chevin Cycles)

Under-12 boy: Bjorn Koerdt (All Terrain Cycles)

Under-12 girl: Holly Deavin (Pedal Sport RT)

Under-10 boy: Noah Ellison (Pedal Sport RT)

Under-10 girl: Imogen Wolff (Wakefield Junior Tri)

Under-eight boy: Jacob Stead (Bolsover & District)

Under-eight girl: Sian Thompson (Bronte Tykes)

North East Series round three (Thorneyford Farm, Ponteland):

Seniors: 1. Tony Fawcett (Vieri Velo RC) 55.46;

2. A. Martin (Newcastle Cheviot CC) +2.03; 3. K. Murray (Scott Racing) +2.42; 4. J. Edmond (Mountain Goat Coaching) +2.43; 5. C. Burns (Cestria CC) +3.55; 6. S. Forster (Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue) at same time

Under-23s: Greg Taylor (Blumilk.com)

Juniors: Finlay Robertson (Derwentside CC)

Veterans: Alan Nixon (Blumilk.com)

Women: Christine Amos-Adams (Chainline CC)

Youth boys: Joseph Allan (Hetton Hawks CC)

Youth girls: Alexandra Rimmer

(Mountain Goat Coaching)

Under-12: Benjamin Partridge (Hetton Hawks CC)

Under-10: Joel Hurt (Achieve Northside)

Snowdon Sports supply domestic results and reports to Cycling Weekly. Please send your information to results@snowdons.co.uk or call 0114 232 5555 and we will do our best to include them in our expanded racing section.

Eastern League round four (Colchester, Essex):

Senior: 1. Matt Holmes (Arctic Tacx RT) 59.40; 2. D. Toms (Iceni Velo) at same time; 3. G. Martin (Ipswich Bicycle Club) +0.47; 4. N. Ellison (WDMBC - Specialized Ruislip) +0.57; 5. S. James (Renvale RT) +1.21; 6. R. Tricker (ViGIOUS VELO) +1.23
Veteran 40-49: Shaun Aldous (Renvale RT)
Veteran 50+: Richard Muchmore (Revel Outdoors)
Woman: Anna Buick (Newdales Cycles RT)
Youth boy: William Raymond (Welwyn Wh CC)
Youth girl: Elspeth Grace (Welwyn Wh CC)
Under-12 boy: Joseph Hadsley (Cycle Club Ashwell)
Under-12 girl: Zoe Swainston (Colchester Rovers CC)
Under-10 boy: Samuel Quiggin (Cycle Club Ashwell)
Under-10 girl: Isla Swainston (Colchester Rovers CC)

Saturday, September 19

Eastern League round three (Redbridge Cycling Centre, Essex):

Senior: 1. Matt Holmes (Arctic Tacx RT) 53.18; 2. J. Birks (VC Londres) +1.37; 3. J. Dennis (unattached) +1.47; 4. R. Tricker (ViGIOUS VELO) +1.49; 5. J. Madgwick (Hackney GT) +1.57; 6. M. Parry (Welwyn Wh CC) +4.27.
Veteran 40-49: Mike Mooney (Cycling Club Hackney)
Veteran 50+: Steven Davies (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley RT)
Woman: Abi Van Twisk (Corley Cycles-Drops RT)
Youth boy: William Raymond (Welwyn Wh CC)
Youth girl: Elspeth Grace (Welwyn Wh CC)
Under-12 boy: Caelan Miller (Barking & Dagenham CC)
Under-12 girl: Poppy Knott (Welwyn Wh CC)

Under-10 boy: Samuel Quiggin (Cycle Club Ashwell)
Under-10 girl: Carys Lloyd (Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club)

SRAM Notts and Derby League round two (Alfreton, Derbyshire):

Senior: 1. Jack Clarkson (Hope Factory Racing) 49.12; 2. N. Barnes (Hargroves RT) at same time; 3. C. Metcalf (Charge Bikes) +0.42; 4. G. Thompson (Sleford Wh) +0.54; 5. P. Cox (Pedalpower Loughborough) +0.56; 6. A. Naylor (Fossa Racing) +0.58; 7. A. Gascoigne (Pedalpower Loughborough) +0.58
Under-23: Nick Barnes
Junior: Joshua Waters (Sherwood Pines)
Women: Annie Simpson (Hope Factory Racing)
Junior women: Madeleine Gammons (Sherwood Pines)
Veteran: Ian Taylor (C&N Cycles)
Veteran woman: Maddi Smith (Bolsover and District CC)
Veteran 45: Mike Young (Pedalsport Cycling Club)
Veteran 50: Timothy Gould (Zepnat.com RT)
Veteran 55: Peter Turner (Derby Mercury RC)
Veteran 60: David Smith (Team Empella)
Veteran 65: Graham Whitting (Bolsover and District)
Veteran 70: John Dowell (Heanor Clarion CC)
Under-16 boy: Tom Dussek (Nottingham Clarion)
Under-16 girl: Xan Crees (Team Empella)
Under-14 boy: Alec Gregory (Leicestershire Road Club)
Under-14 girl: Libby Smith (Fossa Racing)
Under-12 boy: Christopher Hilbert (Pines Cycles Felt Envy)
Under-12 girl: Jessica Tiffany (Derby Mercury RC)
Under-nine boy: Ryan Oldfield (Redditch)
Under-nine girl: Freya Lester (Matlock CC)

Road racing

Sunday, September 20

YESSS Tickhill Grand Prix (Tickhill, near Doncaster):

Men E, 1, 2: 1. Chris Lawless (Team Wiggins) 56.03; 2. G. Briggs (JLT Condor); 3. J. Hales (Spirit Bikes RT); 4. C. Swift (Polypipe CT) all same time; 5. A. Kenway (SportGrub KUOTA) +0.01; 6. T. Mazzone (Polypipe CT) +0.36; 7. S. Wilson (Polypipe CT); 8. O. Peckover (Sherwood Pines Cycles) all st; 9. A. Hepworth (Bike Box Alan/Envelopemaster) +0.37; 10. R. Hepworth (SportGrub KUOTA) st.
Women E, 1, 2: 1. Gabriella Shaw (Pearl Izumi-Sports Tours International) 58.13; 2. H. Colborne (Team Jadan); 3. C. Broughton (Corley Cycles-Drops); 4. E. J. Harris (Army CU); 5. A. Park (Team Giordana Triton); 6. J. George (Les Filles RT); 7. R. Womersley (Corley Cycles-Drops) all same time; 8. E. Stedman (Univ of Sheffield CC) +0.03; 9. D. Beddis (Les Filles RT); 10. T. Davenne (Oxford Univ CC) st

Upton CC End of Summer Road Race (Upton, West Yorkshire):

2, 3, 4: 1. Charlie Renshaw (Bike Box Alan Envelopemaster) 54 miles in 1:55.44; 2. C. Ashley (Beeston RC); 3. K. Zentec (Team Chronomaster); 4. S. Feeney (Team Chronomaster); 5. T. Tharratt (Squadra RT); 6. A. Simmons (BowlPhish Bontrager Racing); 7. G. Pidcock (Chevins Cycles); 8. J. Claydon (The Nab Racing); 9. S. West (G4ace RT); 10. S. Colloby (Paul Milnes Bradford Olympic RC)

Saturday, September 19

Hitter Road Race (Hereford, Herefordshire):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1. Johnny McEvoy (NFTO) 148 kilometres in 3:13.50; 2. M. Curnig (JLT Condor); 3. G. Briggs (JLT Condor) +0.19; 4. I. Bibby (NFTO) +0.19; 5. R. Handley (JLT Condor) +0.21; 6. D. Appleby (NFTO) +2.35; 7. T. Stewart (Madison Genesis) +2.37; 8. R. Lloyd (NFTO) +5.43; 9. E. Laverack (JLT Condor) +5.43; 10. T. Barras (NFTO) +6.10

Prologue Circuit Series, round two (Dishforth, North Yorkshire):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1. Elliot Jones (Paramount CRT); 2. A. Luhrs (Achieve Northside); 3. S. Abbott (THR Racing); 4. A. Turner (Andy Moore Autocentres); 5. Z. Williamson (Team Moda Anon); 6. W. Brown (Achieve Northside).
2, 3, 4: 1. Joe White (G4 Ace RT); 2. T. Wood (Paul Milnes); 3. A. Darbyshire (The Nab Racing); 4. T. Barlett (G4 Ace RT); 5. G. Wiseman (CSP); 6. N. Rollins (Ilkley CC).
Cat 4: 1. Alistair Moffat (unattached); 2. M. Adams (Petuaria RT); 3. P. Armitage (Cappuccino CC); 4. A. Stenson (Royal Air Force); 5. D. Staniforth (unattached); 6. M. Dalby (Harrogate Nova)
Women: 1. Charmaine Porter (ACU); 2. S. Enever (Speedflex RT); 3. S. Wilson (ACU)

Webster Cycles/Leicester Forest CC Road Race (Lutterworth, Leicestershire):

2, 3, 4: 1. Ross Lamb (Beeston CC) 60 miles in 2:14.00; 2. C. Sturgeon (unattached); 3. S. Young (Pedal Pushers); 4. D. Billings (VC St Raphael); 5. O. Davies (OVB); 6. D. Ogg (Beeston CC); 7. R. Orr (unattached); 8. S. Ridsdale (Rugby RCC); 9. G. Woodhead (Lichfield City CC); 10. M. Radford (Wolverhampton Wh).

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USED CYCLES



QUINTANA ROO Triathlon bike for sale matt grey with Ultegra leavers and rear de-railer and FSA crank. I havnt used this bike in about 5 years and have taken some parts off to be used as spares on others. It is missing the Screws for the horizontal drop outs and the lever that adjusts the brakes. These parts can be easily obtained or it will make a great bike to use as spares. It has a light weight aluminium frame with carbon fiber rear stays. £300. Swindon/ Northampton. Tel: 07828 147795. Email: lowtheralistair@yahoo.co.uk 24/9

PENNINE 1965 24" touring bike, 531 tubing, hand built wheels on Campag hubs, 70's Shimano 600 breaks and gears. Also other complete 70's and 80's bikes, hand built wheels, chainsets etc. Pennine £85 Others from £15. Kidderminster. Tel: 01562 850850. Email: mandyambrose7@yahoo.co.uk 24/9



KLEIN Attitude comp. 19.5 inch frame, Shimano parts, Brooks saddle £500. Glasgow. Tel: 0771 2042582. Email: neilwylie8@gmail.com 24/9



RIVETTE R6, 56cm, Unusual and almost unique bike. Black, Alloy frame, Carbon Forks, USE Carbon Bars, Seat-post and Bottle Cages, Fizik Saddle, Mavic SSC Wheels, Ultegra 10 & Compact Chainset, Very good condition. £850 ono. Kingston upon Thames. Tel: 07710 512074. Email: anderson@globalnet.co.uk 24/9



CERVELO RS, 56cm, Full carbon frame/ forks, Campag Chorus Compact 11speed, KsyriumSL wheels, Vittoria tyres, ProVibe stem/ seatpin, Fizik Arione saddle, Summer leisure ridden only, Immaculate in black/white, £1875. Mid Kent. Tel: 01580 753426. Email: david@dchurhill.plus.com 24/9



KINESIS Kenesis RacelightTK, 57cm, Alloy with carbon forks, Campag Centaur compact 10speed, Campag Neutron wheels, Conti tyres, ITM bars/stem, Fizik Arione saddle, Great machine for leisure/ training and winter riding. £895. Mid Kent. Tel: 01580 753426 24/9



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CLAUDE BUTLER Super dalesman 231/2 blue, cantilever brakes, cable guides to top tube bracket, rear alloy carrier with Karrimor panniers, 2 bottle cages, triple forged chain set with 15 wide ratio gears, Madison G12 saddle, clip-less pedals, handlebar bag & touring accessories, in reasonable condition. £600. Dinnington Sheffield (buyer to collect). Tel: 01909 807202. Email: bnsampson02@gmail.com 24/9



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PINARELLO DOGMA F8 Size 50cm Colour is Black on Black Most Bars/Stem 120cm Dura-Ace Di2 Groupset 36/52-12/27 Look Keo Blade pedals Fulcrum Zero Carbon Clinchers Vittoria CX 25mm Tyres Selle Italia Carbonio Flight Saddle Bought New this year but hardly ridden, due to ill health. £6500 ONO. Derbyshire. Tel: 01246 823865. Email: openevents@hotmail.com 24/9



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NEILPRYDE ZEPHYR Frame L full ultragra 11 speed 52/34 di2 less than 150 dry miles 11months old Genuine reason for sale. All accessories , chain guard and bottle cages included £2500. Devon. Tel: 07790 327222. Email: bill.blurton@yahoo.com 1/10



SPIN INDUSTRIES Titanium frame 55.5 top tube, Enve carbon fork, Rotor 3D+30 crank set 172.5, 110bcd, 50/36 Rotor aero Qrings, Rotor chain catcher, Rotor ceramic BB, Campagnolo Chorus group set 11 speed 2015, KMC gold chain, Deda 35 bars, 42cm, Deda stem, Titanium seat post, Selle Italia SLR saddle, Look Keo 2 max pedals, Cinelli carbon cages, Spin Kopenburg 25mm wide wheels, Lizard skin 2.5 tape. Little use as used as shop show bike. Poss split. £3200ono. St Neots, Cambs. Tel: 07437 158637. Email: paulverlander1@gmail.com 1/10



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TREK SPEED CONCEPT 2.5 , 2011. Size Medium. Tyres: Continental (new). Groupset: SRAM Apex changed stock chainrings from a compact to 53/39. Pedals: Look. Recently had a complete full service and not been ridden since - receipt as proof. Can arrange UK delivery for a fee Price: £600. Durham. Tel: 0191 383 0946. Email: lloydharrison@me.com 1/10



COLNAGO BICYCLE 1990'S 21" Frame, Possibly Spiral Conic, Columbus SLX frame with crimped downtube, 21.5" Top tube, 53/39 Chainset, 8 Speed Cassette, Seat pin: Coppi, Saddle: Brooks Leather Wheels and hubs: Mavic 501, Handlebars and stem: 3tt, Brakes: Campagnolo Centaur, Gears, headset, levers (Ergo): Campagnolo, Forks: Colnago Chrome, Cranks: Campagnolo 170mm, Bottle cages & pump: Colnago. Well used with marks and tarnish £550 ONO. London. Tel: 07973 782394. Email: janunderwood22@yahoo.co.uk 1/10



TREK SPEED CONCEPT 9.9 , 2011, Size M. SRAM Red Groupset. Bontrager Aeolus 9.9 wheelset, Draft Box, Speedbox (bento box) and aero bottle (unused) included. Pedals, Saddle and Garmin not included. Delivery in UK at a fee. £2400. Durham. Tel: 07545 590340. Email: lloydharrison@me.com 1/10



CANNONDALE For sale one men's cannondale hybrid road bike, 2014 model Only rode a couple of times. Continental road tyres and 1 pair of hybrid tyres 1 pair of size 10 cycling shoes, 1 kryptonite evolution lock. 2 sets of peddles, Puncture repair kit hand pump, cash on collection. This is being advertised elsewhere. £800. Dartford. Tel: 07894 031275. Email: Asuter117@gmail.com 1/10



MERLIN CR6/4 TI WORKS Titanium frame size 56. Ritchey Carbon WCS Stem, bars and seat post. Reynolds Carbon forks. Dura Ace 10sp comp and standard. Dura Ace cassette. Dura Ace Carbon/alloy C24-CL wheels. Excellent condition. £1200. Durham Tel: 07805 110947. Email: graemeberry@me.com 1/10



MERIDA RIDE DISC 3000 Merida Ride Disc 3000, 2015 model, large carbon frame, 20 speed. £800 O.N.O. Stoke - on - Trent. Tel: 07955 914750 1/10



PINARELLO DOGMA 65.1 50cm Colour 858 Black/White Gloss. Campagnolo Super Record 2015 Groupset, Shamal Dark Label Wheels, Deda Bars and stem. Ex Demo bike mint condition less than 500 miles. Full warranty. £4500. Northern Ireland. Tel: 07775 774949. Email: fraserjonwilson@hotmail.co.uk 1/10



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CYCLEMANIA Sunday 4th October. Cottingham Civic Hall, Hull HU16 5QG. 9.30am - 12pm. Traders from 8.45am. More info at www.cogindustries.blogspot.co.uk / www.facebook.com/cogindustries or telephone 07762 906103 1/10

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Dr Hutch

The Doc joins the crowds at the Tour of Britain, and realises he hasn't got a clue how to behave

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Iwent to watch the final stage of Tour of Britain the other weekend. And I realised I have no idea how to watch a bike race. I've sometimes been a bit hazy about the finer points of how to ride one, but honestly I'm Fabian Cancellara when I measure my tactical nous against what happens when I go to watch.

It means that at most races in the UK, I fit in just fine. None of us knows. We're all in love with cycling, but still, with a handful of honourable exceptions, none of us has a clue what to do when we turn up to an actual race.

For instance, what do you do when the race comes past? "Make some noise!" cried the commentator. "Yeaaaaaa!" I cried, obediently. It felt too close to "Yee-haw!" for comfort. I wondered whether I should have tried a "Whooooo!" But when I gave that a bash next time the race came by, I found I was making a noise like

a cow with a foot stuck in a rabbit hole. Cheering is the most basic act of competent spectating, and it's beyond me. I suddenly saw the point of cheerleaders — if I could have outsourced being encouraging, I would have.

On the other hand, the guy next to me, every time the race came by, shouted, "COME ON WILLIAM! COME ON WILLIAM! THIS ONE IS FOR BRAINTREE!" I don't know what sporting event he thought he was watching. Presumably one with someone called William in it. But my God, he sounded like he knew what he was cheering about.

From the mouths of amateurs

There were two men behind me. One of them had clearly never seen a bike race in his life. He wasn't going to let that stop him from explaining to his companion exactly how one worked.

He had, at least, figured out that it was a team game. "It's the same as football," he said. He gestured at the bunch, and continued, "Some of these guys are kind of midfield riders. And some of them are kind of the ball, so the midfielder-riders are trying to get the ball-riders up to the front and across the line. And you get the crashes when one team's defenders tackle another team's ball, and the midfielders all pile into them. That bit's more like a ruck in rugby, really."

It was actually rather ingenious, because it is a bit like that. Hell, the finish-line gantry even looks a little like a goal. Then he spoiled it by claiming that MTN-Qhubeka's back-and-white



striped shirts meant that they were the referees. He was still Sean Kelly compared to the teenager who, as the race vehicle convoy came steaming up Regent Street, said, "Why do some of them have cars?"

Old guard

It's all brilliant. I simply love it that people turn out to watch cycling, despite having no involvement or interest beyond still having a three-year-old pair of cut-out-and-keep commemorative sideburns from Sir Bradley Wiggins's Tour and Olympic double.

Acts of Cycling Stupidity

I was out for a run recently (I know, I know), and was overtaken by a man on a road bike, clearly out training. He had — as occasionally is the case — a small child in a seat on the back. I always like to see someone who hasn't let family responsibility get in the way of their riding.

Just as I was thinking that, the man turned his head, and with a horrible noise, cleared his nostrils. In the crosswind, he caught the kid full in the face with about half a pint of snot. The kid didn't make a noise. I got the feeling he was completely used to it.

"How wonderful," I thought, "to see someone who has acquired one of the essential skills of cycling so young."

Mileage 1870

There was once no higher compliment you could pay a friend than to say, "He always takes the long way home for some extra miles." It was the exact equivalent of saying, "He holds 40 KoMs on Strava."

The dedicated clubman would fill in the mileage bar-chart that this very magazine issues in its first edition of each year. Then, the following January, he could send it to the magazine, which would publish a selection of the most interesting mileage stories of the year. (Sample quote: "John's mileage in July was lower than in June, despite the fine weather, because he went to Skegness with the family for a fortnight, and only had time for 300 miles a week while he was away.")

“I suddenly saw the point of cheerleaders — if I could’ve outsourced being encouraging, I would have”

unrelenting drizzle that was more or less a metaphor for the state of British cycling in that era.

They clearly wanted to stand out from the newcomers. They had musettes for their packed lunches, and were wearing full kit from one of Hertfordshire's best-known and oldest-established clubs, including cleated road shoes. It was clear that they were people who came to bike races the way God intended.



Classics 'King' Sean Kelly twice steered his Vitus 979 to Paris-Roubaix victory

Vitus 979

Take one Irishman, add a wholly Gallic bike and the result is Classics gold, reveals *Simon Smythe*

It was thoroughly French, especially in its classic 'tout Mavic' specification, but the Vitus 979 will be forever associated with Irishman Sean Kelly, who rode this jewel of a bike to its most famous victories.

Unless you know the story, Kelly and the 979 may seem an odd couple. 'King' Kelly, perhaps the last true all-rounder who ticked off one-day cobbled Classics just as easily as stage races, was a no-nonsense, old-school hardman from rural County Waterford. The Vitus 979 was as slender, sophisticated and downright Gallic as the Gitanes cigarette between Brigitte Bardot's lips.

Kelly was spotted by, and spent most of his pro career racing for, the legendary directeur sportif Jean de Gribaldy. The Frenchman famously came to Kelly's parents' farm to sign him up.

De Gribaldy was ahead of his time in

his training methods and approach to nutrition so it follows that he didn't hesitate to have his team compete on the most radical bike of the mid-1980s. Crucially, although he was different in his approach to cycling, cycling was not a game for de Gribaldy. "We play football, tennis, hockey, but we do not play at cycling," he said. In other words, he had complete faith that the 979, whose lightweight anodised aluminium tubes were glued into aluminium lugs rather than welded together (TIG welding for aluminium had yet to be developed), would not fall apart during the most demanding races, such as Paris-Roubaix, which Kelly won twice.

Assuming the glued tubes held together, would the frame be stiff enough for a rider with Kelly's strength — not just a GC contender but also a formidable sprinter who won the green jersey at the

Tour de France four times? The answer was a resounding 'oui'.

The soft aluminium Duralinox fork actually suited the punishing parcours of Paris-Roubaix and the whippiness of the main triangle may have even complemented Kelly's smooth pedalling style: he won races on the 979 right up until his second and final Milan-San Remo victory in 1992.

The interference fit of the tubes into the lugs, which were bonded in place using a dry heat-activated epoxy, was an aerospace industry method patented in 1984 by Ateliers de la Rive, the maker of the Vitus 979 Duralinox. In its catalogue Vitus pointed out that bonding has no influence on the properties of the alloys forming the joint, unlike in welding or brazing. It also claimed a "degree of shock absorbing elasticity" and said its frame was 30 per cent lighter than its equivalent in steel. Producing a bonded frame in large quantities was also easier and kept manufacturing costs down.

Vitus changed hands several times from the mid-1990s onwards and is now resurgent under the stewardship of Chain Reaction Cycles, with Kelly as brand ambassador. However, you won't find a 979 in the 2015 line-up.

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